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Deep-Dish Stuffed Pepperoni Pizza
PAGE 31

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CAST IRON— IT'S THE HOTTEST COOKWARE ON THE MARKET TODAY

And for good reason–it's also what our grandparents used for cooking. From making the perfect eggs to baking delicious cobblers, cast iron is prized for its versatility, natural nonstick surface and ability to hold heat. It is also incredibly durable and long-lasting.

Whether you have a newly purchased pan or one that's been handed down from one generation to the next, *Cooking With Cast Iron* will become an indispensable source for fully enjoying the culinary benefits of cast iron. The more than 60 recipes run the gamut from skillet classics like fried chicken, a Dutch Baby pancake and crispy cornbread to innovative, soon-to-be favorites like Deep-Dish Stuffed Pepperoni Pizza, Mocha Pudding Cake and Candied Peppery Maple Bacon. In addition, there's a selection of skillet suppers, casseroles and slow-braised and oven-roasted recipes to celebrate cool-weather cooking.

If you're unfamiliar with or intimidated by using cast iron, we've got you covered. Turn to page 6 for a guide that covers all of the basics–everything from buying the right cookware for your needs, cleaning and caring for it as well as simple tips and tricks for using it for more than just cooking. And to help you perfect your technique, we've included Cast-Iron Cooking School classes that will show you how to sear the perfect steak, fry great-looking sunny-side-up eggs and roast root vegetables. We even demonstrate how to use a cast-iron skillet to keep chilled desserts and other foods cold when transporting them to a potluck or serving them on a holiday buffet table.

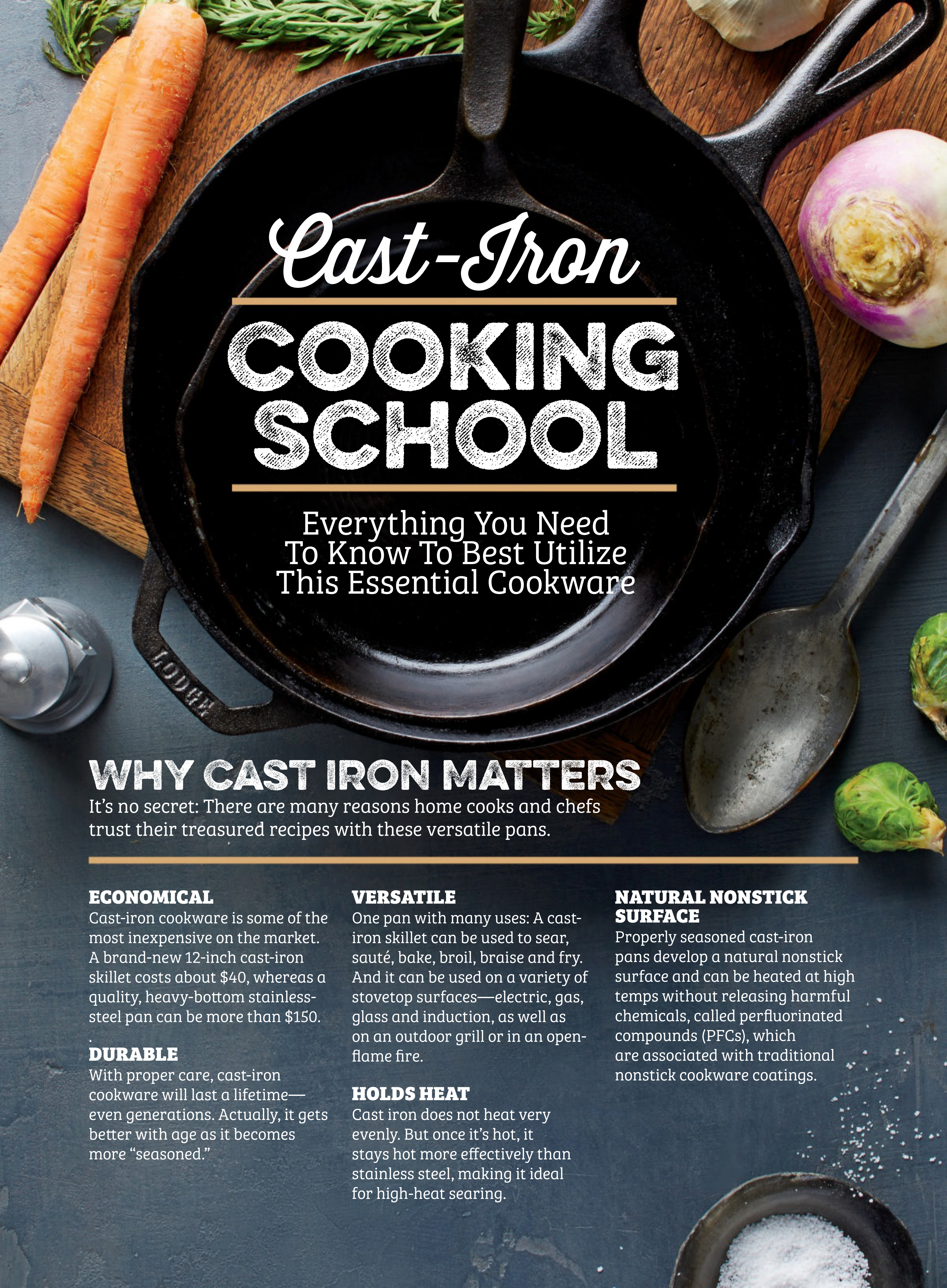
So, pull out your skillet and grab your Dutch oven. It's time to start *Cooking With Cast Iron*!

The Editors
Centennial Kitchen

49
Spanish-Style Paella

Table of CONTENTS

4 CAST-IRON COOKING SCHOOL
8 BREAKFAST & BRUNCH
20 SANDWICHES, BURGERS & PIZZA
32 SEAR DELIGHTS
42 ONE-POT SUPPERS
54 BRAISING, STEWING & ROASTING
64 COUNTRY CASSEROLES
80 BISCUITS & BREADS
98 COMFORT DESSERTS



Cast-Iron COOKING SCHOOL

Everything You Need To Know To Best Utilize This Essential Cookware

WHY CAST IRON MATTERS

It's no secret: There are many reasons home cooks and chefs trust their treasured recipes with these versatile pans.

ECONOMICAL
Cast-iron cookware is some of the most inexpensive on the market. A brand-new 12-inch cast-iron skillet costs about $40, whereas a quality, heavy-bottom stainless-steel pan can be more than $150.

DURABLE
With proper care, cast-iron cookware will last a lifetime—even generations. Actually, it gets better with age as it becomes more "seasoned."

VERSATILE
One pan with many uses: A cast-iron skillet can be used to sear, sauté, bake, broil, braise and fry. And it can be used on a variety of stovetop surfaces—electric, gas, glass and induction, as well as on an outdoor grill or in an open-flame fire.

HOLDS HEAT
Cast iron does not heat very evenly. But once it's hot, it stays hot more effectively than stainless steel, making it ideal for high-heat searing.

NATURAL NONSTICK SURFACE
Properly seasoned cast-iron pans develop a natural nonstick surface and can be heated at high temps without releasing harmful chemicals, called perfluorinated compounds (PFCs), which are associated with traditional nonstick cookware coatings.

EVERYDAY USE & CARE

It’s as easy as 1-2-3 to maintain your cast-iron pan.

Keep it Clean As soon as your cast-iron pan is cool, clean it with mild soapy water. For cooked-on food, gently scrub the pan with a stiff natural- or plastic-bristled brush or a nonscratch scouring pad.

Keep it Dry After rinsing, promptly dry cast-iron cookware with a kitchen dish towel or paper towels. Any moisture remaining will cause the pan to rust.

Keep it Oiled Prime the pan for its next use by rubbing about ½ teaspoon flaxseed or vegetable oil in the pan. Then heat the pan briefly on the stovetop or in the oven until it is lightly smoking.

Cleaning Enamel-Coated Cast Iron Simple soap and water should do the trick. For cooked-on food, soak the pot in soapy water and gently scrub it with a plastic scrub brush. Light stains or metal scrape marks can be removed by using cleaning products specially designed for enamel-coated pots and pans. Or mix a solution of 3 parts bleach to 1 part water, fill the pot or pan and let it stand overnight.

STUCK-ON FOOD CAN’T GET THE FOOD OFF? USE COARSE SALT FOR SCOURING. IT ACTS AS AN ABRASIVE WITHOUT RUINING THE SEASONING.

CRUSTY GUNK

To get rid of years of baked-on gunk, spray your skillet with oven cleaner and place it in a tightly closed plastic trash bag. After a couple days, remove the skillet from the bag, rinse it in a vinegar solution, wash it with soapy water and rinse. Dry the skillet and reseason it. (Be sure to wear protective gloves. The chemicals in the oven cleaner can burn your skin and eyes.)

SEASON THE NEW AND RESEASON THE OLD

“Seasoning” is basically baking fat into the surface of a cast-iron pan to form a slick protective layer. For new cookware and older cookware that has lost its natural nonstick coating, follow these easy steps.

- Wash and dry the pan.
- Rub both the inside and outside with a thin layer of cooking oil, such as flaxseed, soybean or canola oil.
- Line the lower oven rack with foil; place the cast-iron pan upside down on the upper rack and bake it at 400°F for 1 hour.
- Turn off the oven and let the pan cool in the oven.
- Repeat oiling and baking until the pan has a glossy finish.

Rusty Pans Remove any rust from an older pan by lightly rubbing the rust spot with fine steel wool. To help loosen the rust, soak the pan overnight in Coca-Cola®.

CAST-IRON COOKWARE

SKILLETS

Skillets are the most popular cast-iron products due to their versatility, durability and chemical-free way of cooking. Skillets range from 3½ inches to 15 inches or more in diameter. A 10-inch skillet is a good size for cooking most items as well as for baking cakes and pies. A 12-inch skillet will give you a little more room for making family-size meals and a 6-inch skillet is ideal for making one- or two-serving meals.

GRIDDLES & GRID PANS

Smooth-surface griddles and ribbed-surface grills can be round, square or rectangular (double-burner). Many griddles have shallow sides for ease in flipping pancakes and frying eggs. Ribbed-bottom grills will keep food out of drippings and leave sear marks on the food surface, much like on an outdoor grill.

DUTCH OVENS

Dutch ovens are simply heavy metal pots with thick walls and lids. You can braise, bake and stew in a Dutch oven. They range in sizes from 1½ quarts, serving one or two, to 12 quarts, serving as many as 22 to 28. A 5-quart Dutch oven typically serves 6 to 8 and is a good size for most basic braises.

SPECIALTY ITEMS & BAKEWARE

You can find a variety of shapes and sizes in cast-iron pans that are used for baking and specialty cooking. A sampling of these pans includes muffin cups, drop-biscuit pans, wedge skillets, cornstick pans, loaf pans, pie plates, rectangular cake and roasting pans, fluted Bundt cake pans and ebelskiver pans.

SO MANY CHOICES WHEN SHOPPING

Okay, so you decided on the style and size of your pan. What other choices do you need to consider?

Weighing the Choices Traditional cast-iron cookware s quite heavy. Lighter cast-iron cookware is now available that is much easier to pick up and handle during cooking. It also heats up quicker. However, lighter pans won't hold the heat as long or cook as evenly as its thicker, traditional counterpart.

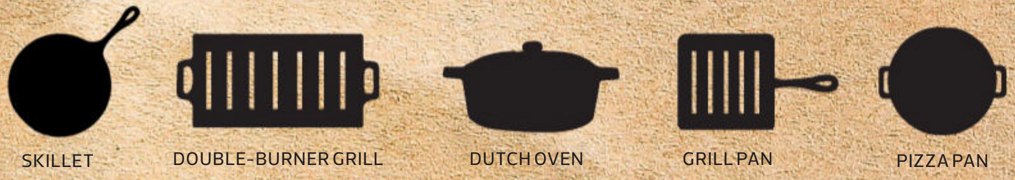
Seasoned vs. Unseasoned Some cast-iron cookware comes preseasoned from the factory with a vegetable oil baked in at a high heat to form a natural nonstick surface. It's nearly ready to use right out of the box. Just wash, dry, then use the skillet. No initial seasoning is required.

Enamel Coated Available in elegant designs and an array of colors, enamel-coated cookware can complement your kitchen or dining room decor. Similar to preseasoned cast-iron cookware, enamel- or porcelain-coated cookware doesn't need seasoning. They do come with a higher price tag and require some maintenance and care to keep the finish intact.

Support Handles A cast-iron skillet alone can be heavy to handle. And adding food to the skillet makes it more difficult for lifting and moving. Many skillets have support handles opposite the skillet handles to reduce the chance of the pan being too heavy for your wrist to support.

Cast-Iron Key

At a glance, you'll know what pan to use for cooking. At the top of each recipe is a symbol showing the recommended pan.



TIPS & TRICKS

Panini Press

For a makeshift panini press, use the weight of a cast-iron skillet to press on your panini sandwich while it cooks in a grill pan. A heavy cast-iron skillet also works well for weighting spatchcocked or flattened chicken to ensure maximum surface contact with the cooking skillet.

Turn Down the Heat

Cast iron is a great heat conductor. When cooking with cast iron, you'll often find yourself turning down the temperature setting to maintain the correct cooking temperature.

Take it Slow

Always begin heating cast-iron pans on low, then to medium then to medium-high. Also, never submerge a hot pan into cold water. Quickly and drastically changing the metal temperature will cause cast iron to crack. Whereas aluminum cookware will warp.

Making the Marks

For perfect grill marks, wipe oil on the ribs of a cold grill pan with a paper towel. Heat the pan until hot; place the food on the grill. Let the food cook undisturbed until grill marks appear. Then turn the food a quarter turn, or 45 degrees, and let it sear to make cross- hatch marks.

Distribute the Heat

Convert your cast-iron skillet into a flame tamer or burner heat diffuser. Simply place the skillet over low heat, then place your saucepan containing gravy, melted butter or other food in the skillet. The cast-iron will moderate the heat and keep the food from scorching in the saucepan.

Remove the Food

Transfer leftovers to another container for storage. The acids in the foods can break down the seasoning and will give your food a metallic taste.

Warm it Up

Always start with a warm or hot cast-iron pan before adding food to prevent food from sticking.

Flip for Pizza

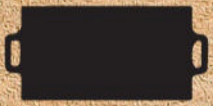
Want a crispy pizza crust, but don't have a round cast-iron baking pan? Just flip over a 12-inch skillet and preheat it in the oven. Then place the frozen pizza on the bottom of the skillet to bake.

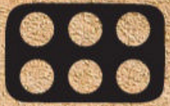
Quick Thaw

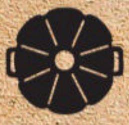
Thaw thin-cut meats quickly by placing them in a single layer in your cast-iron skillet for an hour before cooking. The ambient heat from the metal to the food will quickly thaw the meat.

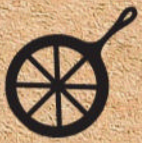
Crushing Spices

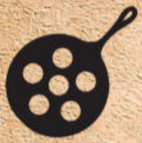
Turn your cast-iron skillet into a mortar and pestle for crushing whole spices. Place whole spices on a cutting board or in a large skillet and use a small cast-iron skillet to press down and crush the spices.


DOUBLE-BURNER GRIDDLE


MUFFIN PAN


FLUTED CAKE PAN


WEDGE PAN


EBELSKIVER PAN

Classic Dutch Baby, *page 15*

Breakfast & BRUNCH

START YOUR DAY STRONG
WITH THESE HEARTY MEALS—
FROM PANCAKES TO FRIED EGGS
AND FRITTATAS TO QUICHES AND
MORE—COOKED IN CAST IRON.

STREUSEL-ALMOND COFFEE CAKE

PREP 20 minutes **BAKE** 40 minutes **COOL** 15 minutes **SERVES** 9

If you're not a morning person, just make this crumb-topped coffee cake the night before. It's every bit as yummy the day after it's baked.

TOPPING

½	cup granulated sugar
½	cup packed dark brown sugar
1	teaspoon ground cinnamon
¼	teaspoon salt
10	tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
2¼	cups cake flour

COFFEE CAKE

	Nonstick cooking spray
½	cup unsalted butter, softened
⅔	cup sugar
2	eggs, at room temperature
1	egg yolk, at room temperature
1	teaspoon almond extract
1¾	cups cake flour
½	teaspoon baking soda
¼	teaspoon salt
½	cup buttermilk
¾	cup slivered almonds

1 Preheat oven to 325°F.

2 For topping, in a small bowl combine granulated sugar, brown sugar, cinnamon and salt. Stir in melted butter. Add flour; stir until mixture forms a soft dough. Set aside.

3 For coffee cake, lightly spray a 10-inch cast-iron skillet with nonstick spray; set aside. In a large bowl, using an electric mixer, beat butter 30 seconds. Add sugar, eggs, egg yolk and almond extract; beat until combined. Add ¾ cup flour, baking soda and salt; beat just until combined. Alternately add remaining 1 cup flour and buttermilk; beat on high speed 2 minutes or until light and fluffy. Stir in almonds.

4 Spread batter evenly in prepared skillet. Crumble topping on top in the size of dried beans; slightly press into cake batter.

5 Bake 40 to 50 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near center comes out clean. Cool in skillet on a wire rack at least 15 minutes before serving.

Tasty to the last crumb

BUTTERMILK GRIDDLE CAKES WITH MAPLE-NUT SYRUP

PREP 20 minutes **COOK** 5 minutes per batch **SERVES** 6

Want to make perfect pancakes? A hot cast-iron griddle gets the heat just right for making golden pancakes with slightly crispy edges and light, fluffy insides. When a drop of water dances across the surface, the griddle is ready for cooking.

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon granulated sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
¾ teaspoon salt
2 eggs
2 cups buttermilk
3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
Maple-Pecan Syrup

1 In a large bowl whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder and salt.

2 In a small bowl whisk together eggs, buttermilk and melted butter. Add buttermilk mixture to flour mixture; whisk just until combined (batter will be thick and slightly lumpy).

3 Lightly brush a cast-iron griddle with oil; heat over medium heat. Using a measuring cup, pour about ⅓ cup batter onto the heated griddle, spacing pancakes 1 inch apart. If necessary, slightly spread batter. Cook 3 minutes or until bubbles appear on surfaces and bottoms are golden brown. Turn pancakes; cook 2 minutes or until bottoms are golden brown. Serve with Maple-Pecan Syrup.

MAPLE-NUT SYRUP

1½ cups real maple syrup
1 cup toasted walnuts or pecans, chopped
½ teaspoon orange zest
½ teaspoon vanilla extract

1 In a small saucepan combine maple syrup, nuts, orange zest and vanilla. Heat 5 minutes over medium-low heat until warm.

2 To store leftover syrup, cool syrup. Transfer to a covered container and refrigerate up to 2 weeks.

EGG, SPINACH AND CANADIAN BACON STRATA

PREP 25 minutes **STAND** 1 hour 5 minutes **BAKE** 30 minutes **SERVES** 6 to 8

Stratas are popular for brunch because they actually have to be made the night before and baked in the morning in order to develop their custardy goodness.

10	**eggs**
3	**cups half-and-half or light cream**
¾	**teaspoon coarse kosher salt**
½	**teaspoon black pepper**
¼	**teaspoon cayenne pepper**
¼	**teaspoon ground nutmeg**
8	**cups cubed French bread**
	Nonstick cooking spray
3	**tablespoons unsalted butter**
8	**ounces Canadian bacon, cut into ½-inch cubes**
½	**cup chopped yellow onion**
1	**teaspoon minced garlic**
1	**pound baby spinach**
2	**cups shredded Swiss cheese**
½	**cup finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese**

1 In a large bowl whisk together eggs, half-and-half, ½ teaspoon salt, black pepper, cayenne and nutmeg. Add bread; slightly press bread into egg mixture to moisten all of the bread. Cover with plastic wrap; let stand 1 hour at room temperature or refrigerate overnight.

2 Preheat oven to 400°F.

3 Spray bottom and sides of a 4-quart cast-iron Dutch oven with nonstick spray. Add butter and melt over medium-high heat. Add the Canadian bacon, onion, garlic and remaining ¼ teaspoon salt; cook 2 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add spinach in batches and cook just until wilted. Transfer half the mixture to a bowl; set aside.

4 To layer strata, spoon half the bread mixture on top of spinach mixture in Dutch oven; sprinkle with half each of the Swiss and Parmigiano-Reggiano cheeses. Repeat layers with remaining spinach mixture, bread mixture and cheeses.

5 Bake, uncovered, 30 minutes or until a knife inserted near center comes out clean and strata is puffed and lightly golden. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

6 To serve, loosen strata by running a narrow silicone spatula around the sides and bottom of the pan. Tilt the pan and give it a slight shake, allowing the strata to slide out onto a serving plate. Cut into wedges.

CHEESY SPINACH AND ZUCCHINI FRITTATA

PREP 15 minutes **COOK** 7 minutes **BAKE** 12 minutes **STAND** 5 minutes **SERVES** 6 to 8

Loaded with lots of good-for-you veggies, this cheesy frittata makes a tasty breakfast or brunch—or a light supper entrée. Add a few slices of melon, and your meal is complete.

8	**eggs**
½	**cup milk**
1	**teaspoon minced garlic**
1	**teaspoon Italian seasoning**
½	**teaspoon salt**
¼	**teaspoon black pepper**
1	**cup shredded Italian blend cheese**
1	**tablespoon olive oil**
½	**cup chopped red onion**
2	**cups thinly sliced zucchini**
⅓	**cup water**
2	**cups baby spinach**
⅓	**cup thinly sliced green onions**

1 Preheat oven to 425°F. In a large bowl whisk together the eggs, milk, garlic, Italian seasoning, ¼ teaspoon salt and black pepper. Stir in ½ cup cheese; set aside.

2 In a 10-inch cast-iron skillet heat oil over medium heat until shimmering. Add onion and the remaining ¼ teaspoon salt. Cook 5 minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally.

3 Carefully add zucchini and water to skillet. Cover and steam zucchini 1 to 2 minutes or until crisp-tender. Add spinach and green onions; cook and stir 30 to 60 seconds until spinach is wilted.

4 Evenly spread vegetable mixture in bottom of skillet. Stir egg mixture and pour over vegetable layer. Sprinkle with remaining cheese. Transfer skillet to oven; bake 12 to 15 minutes or until almost set. Remove from oven. Loosely cover; let stand 5 minutes. Slice into wedges to serve.

SAUSAGE 'N' CHEDDAR GRITS QUICHE

PREP 30 minutes **COOK** 8 minutes **BAKE** 55 minutes **STAND** 20 minutes **SERVES** 8

Grits serve as the "crust" to this flavorful quiche. Stone-ground grits may be a little tricky to find, but the taste is well worth the search. If you can't find stone-ground grits at your local supermarket, you can order them online.

GRITS LAYER

2¼ cups whole milk
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
½ cup stone-ground grits
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon black pepper
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
1 egg, slightly beaten

QUICHE LAYER

Shortening or nonstick cooking spray
1 pound bulk pork sausage
6 eggs
¼ cup heavy whipping cream
¼ cup whole milk
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon black pepper
¾ cup shredded cheddar cheese
⅓ cup thinly sliced green onions

1 Preheat oven to 350°F.

2 For grits, in a medium saucepan bring milk and butter to a boil over medium-low heat. Whisk in grits, salt and pepper. Cook 8 to 10 minutes or until very thick, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon. Remove from heat; stir in cheese and egg. Let stand 10 minutes.

3 Lightly brush a 12-inch cast-iron skillet with shortening or lightly spray with nonstick spray. Place skillet in oven 10 minutes to heat. Using oven mitts, remove skillet from oven. Evenly spread grits in skillet. Bake 25 minutes or until set.

4 Meanwhile, for quiche mixture, in another skillet cook sausage until cooked through. Drain loose sausage on paper towels; set aside. In a large bowl whisk together eggs, cream, milk, salt and pepper. Stir in cheese.

5 Remove skillet with grits from oven. Reduce oven temperature to 325°F.

6 Sprinkle sausage evenly on grits. Pour egg mixture over sausage; sprinkle with green onions.

7 Return skillet to oven; bake 30 minutes or until set. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

Quiche with a Southern twist

CLASSIC DUTCH BABY

PREP 10 minutes **BAKE** 20 minutes **SERVES** 4

This large fluffy popover-like pancake is delicious for breakfast, lunch or dessert. Serve it on its own with a sprinkling of powdered sugar and a drizzle of syrup, or fill it with a medley of berries or the apple-bacon filling as shown above.

- 2 **tablespoons butter**
- 3 **eggs**
- ½ **cup all-purpose flour**
- ½ **cup milk**
- 1 **teaspoon canola oil**
- 1 **teaspoon vanilla extract**
- ¼ **teaspoon salt**
- **Powdered sugar**
- **Maple or berry pancake syrup**

1 Preheat oven to 425°F. Place butter in a 10-inch cast-iron skillet; place skillet in oven until butter is melted and skillet is hot.

2 Meanwhile, in a blender combine eggs, flour, milk, oil, vanilla and salt. Cover and blend until well combined.

3 Remove skillet from oven. Swirl melted butter in bottom of pan to coat evenly. Pour batter into hot skillet. Bake 20 to 30 minutes or until puffed and golden. Sprinkle with powdered sugar; serve immediately with syrup or with apple-bacon filling (below).

APPLE-BACON FILLING

Prepare and bake Dutch Baby as directed. While Dutch Baby is baking, in a medium skillet cook 3 slices cut-up bacon over medium heat 6 to 8 minutes or until slightly crisp. Remove from skillet; discard drippings. Melt 1 tablespoon butter in skillet. Stir in 2 teaspoons brown sugar, 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice and ½ teaspoon apple pie spice. Add 2 large cored apples, thinly sliced; toss to coat. Cook over medium heat 5 to 8 minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally. Add bacon. Immediately fill baked pancake with apple-bacon filling and serve.

CANDIED PEPPERY MAPLE BACON

PREP 5 minutes **COOK** 9 minutes per batch **MAKES** 12 slices

Slightly sweet with a peppery little kick, this bacon is a delicious mate to sunny-side-up eggs or a stack of pancakes. Or try it on its own as a midmorning protein snack.

12	**thick-cut slices bacon**
¼	**cup pure maple syrup**
1	**tablespoon dark brown sugar**
½	**teaspoon freshly coarse-ground black pepper**

1 In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet or grill pan (or double-burner grill with drip-catching edge) cook bacon over medium heat 5 to 6 minutes until lightly browned on edges but still pliable. Drain bacon on paper towels. Carefully pour drippings from skillet or grill pan; discard or cover and refrigerate for another use.

2 For glaze, in a small bowl or custard cup combine maple syrup, brown sugar and black pepper.

3 Arrange bacon in a single layer in skillet or grill pan. Brush bacon with glaze and turn. Cook bacon, glazed side down, over low heat 2 minutes or until glaze begins to caramelize. Brush top of bacon with glaze; turn and cook 2 minutes more or until caramelized.

4 Transfer bacon to a parchment-lined platter or cutting board; cool before serving.

Cast-Iron

COOKING SCHOOL

FRYING PERFECT EGGS

Think that a perfectly fried egg needs to be cooked in a traditional nonstick skillet? Think again. Use a well-seasoned cast-iron skillet. The more you use your skillet, the better the skillet becomes in creating a slick, natural nonstick surface.

HOW TO

It's a breakfast delight—a perfectly fried egg with crisp, lacy edges and a deliciously runny yolk for serving alongside bacon, on top of toast or for adding to a potato-skillet dish.

1 Heat cast-iron skillet over medium heat. Add butter; melt. (Use 2 teaspoons for one or two eggs; 1½ tablespoons butter for four eggs.)

2 Crack an egg into a small prep dish or custard cup. When butter is hot, slide the egg into the skillet. Repeat to add additional eggs.

3 Reduce heat to low. Cook, uncovered, 3 minutes or until whites are firm and yolks begin to thicken.

4 For *sunny-side-up eggs*, tilt the skillet to spoon a pool of the butter; drizzle the hot butter over the eggs to baste them. Using a spatula, carefully transfer eggs from skillet to plates. For *over-easy eggs*, use a spatula to gently flip the eggs and cook 20 seconds more.

5 Using a spatula, carefully transfer the eggs from the skillet to plates. Serve immediately. Enjoy!

5 TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Use a well-seasoned cast-iron skillet so sticking won't be an issue.
- Match skillet size to the number of eggs you're cooking. Choose a skillet large enough so the egg whites don't run together: 3½- to 6-inch skillet for one egg, 8- to 10-inch for two eggs and 10- to 12-inch for four eggs.
- Use fresh eggs to make the prettiest-looking fried eggs—the egg whites hold their shape better and the yolks stand higher.
- Hold the prep dish close to the surface of the skillet when slipping the egg from the dish into the skillet for a neat shaped fried egg.
- Use gentle heat. If the heat is too high, the eggs will become tough and rubbery.

Egg-citing Ideas Fried eggs are a surprisingly satisfying lunch or dinner. Slip a fried egg onto a baked potato, burger, steak, bruschetta, grits, spaghetti, salad—even a pizza!

SAGE PORK BREAKFAST PATTIES

PREP 20 minutes **COOK** 6 minutes per batch **MAKES** 6 to 8 patties

Making homemade sausage patties is a snap. To save time in the morning, mix and form the patties the night before and refrigerate them covered with plastic wrap.

	Nonstick cooking spray
1	**pound ground pork**
2	**teaspoons dark brown sugar**
1	**teaspoon coarse kosher salt**
1	**teaspoon garlic powder**
1	**teaspoon ground sage**
½	**teaspoon dried thyme**
½	**teaspoon dried marjoram**
½	**teaspoon fennel seeds**
½	**teaspoon black pepper**
¼	**teaspoon ground nutmeg**

1 Lightly spray a cast-iron skillet or grill pan with nonstick spray. Preheat skillet or grill over medium-high heat.

2 Meanwhile, place ground pork in a medium bowl. In a prep dish or custard cup combine brown sugar, salt, garlic powder, sage, thyme, marjoram, fennel seeds, black pepper and nutmeg. Add spice mixture to pork; gently mix until combined.

3 Using a heaping ¼ cup pork mixture for each patty, form 3-inch-round, ¼-inch-thick patties.

4 Cook patties in hot skillet or grill pan 6 to 10 minutes or until thermometer inserted near centers registers 160°F, turning once.

SWEET POTATO AND HAM HASH

PREP 20 minutes **COOK** 14 minutes **SERVES** 4

Enjoy this rustic restaurant-style skillet breakfast at home—it's even topped with sunny-side-up eggs! For a fun, colorful twist, use a combo of white and sweet potatoes.

FOR THE HASH

- **2 tablespoons vegetable oil**
- **4 cups ¼-inch peeled and diced sweet potatoes and/or white potatoes**
- **½ teaspoon salt**
- **¼ teaspoon black pepper**
- **1 cup finely chopped red onions**
- **½ cup finely chopped yellow bell pepper**
- **½ cup diced green bell pepper**
- **½ cup finely diced honey or brown sugar cured ham**
- **4 eggs**
- **Crushed red pepper (optional)**

1 In a 10- or 12-inch cast-iron skillet heat oil over medium heat until shimmering. Add potatoes; spread in a single layer. Cook 3 to 4 minutes or until browned on the bottom.

2 Sprinkle potatoes with salt and black pepper. Top with onions, bell peppers and ham. Cook 8 to 10 minutes or until onions are slightly golden and potatoes are tender.

3 Using a wooden spoon, make 4 indentations in the hash. Break 1 egg into a prep dish or custard cup; slide the egg into an indentation. Repeat with remaining eggs. Cover and cook over low heat 3 to 4 minutes or until whites are set and yolks are cooked to desired doneness.

4 Using a spatula, transfer individual portions of hash with an egg to each plate. Season to taste with additional salt and black pepper and, if desired, crushed red pepper.

Good old-fashioned hash browns and eggs

Turkey, Pear and Brie Panini, *page 29*

Sandwiches, BURGERS & PIZZA

CAST IRON WORKS MAGIC ON THESE FAVORITE FORK-FREE FOODS. SANDWICHES GET EDGE-TO-EDGE TOASTY AND EVENLY GOLDEN WHILE PIZZA ACQUIRES A CRISPY CRUST WITH A CHEWY INSIDE.

TOMATO, BACON AND AVOCADO GRILLED CHEESE

PREP 15 minutes **COOK** 16 minutes per batch **SERVES** 4

Buttery avocado, crispy bacon and two cheeses dress up this humble quickie supper. Cook the sandwiches in a skillet—or for fancy grill marks, use a grill pan.

2 large tomatoes, sliced ¼-inch thick
¼ teaspoon coarse kosher salt
¼ teaspoon cracked black pepper
12 ounces sliced bacon
½ cup mayonnaise
8 slices sourdough or country bread, ½-inch thick
8 ounces sliced Gruyère cheese
8 ounces sliced provolone
1 large avocado, sliced

1 Sprinkle both sides of tomato slices with salt and pepper; set aside.

2 In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet or grill pan cook bacon in batches over medium heat 6 to 8 minutes or until slightly crisp. Drain bacon on paper towels; set aside.

3 Carefully pour drippings from skillet or grill pan; discard drippings or cover and refrigerate for another use. Wipe out skillet with paper towels; reduce heat to medium-low.

4 To assemble sandwiches, spread half of the mayonnaise on one side of 4 bread slices. Place bread slices, mayonnaise sides down, in skillet or grill pan. (If all 4 bread slices do not fit, cook sandwiches in two batches.) Layer bread slices with Gruyère and provolone cheeses, sliced tomatoes, avocado and bacon. Place remaining bread slices on top; spread with remaining mayonnaise.

5 Cook sandwiches, covered, 5 minutes or until bottoms are golden. Using a wide spatula, carefully turn sandwiches over and cook, covered, 5 minutes or until toasted and cheese is melted.

6 Cut sandwiches in half; serve immediately.

GRILLED CHEESE WITH ARTICHOKE AND SPINACH

PREP 20 minutes **COOK** 10 minutes per batch **SERVES** 3

These grown-up grilled cheese sandwiches are a tasty take on artichoke-spinach dip between slices of toasted bread!

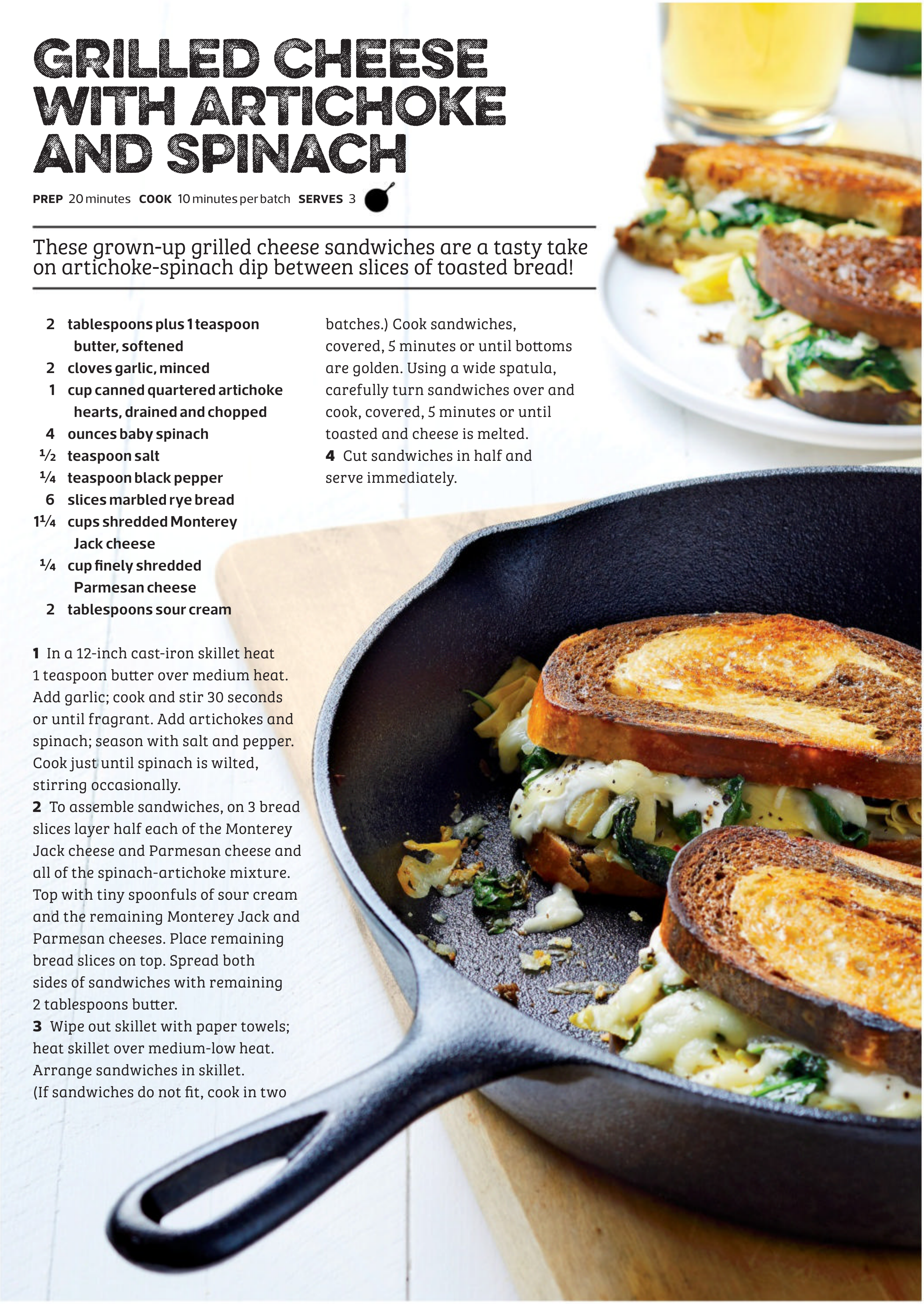
- **2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon butter, softened**
- **2 cloves garlic, minced**
- **1 cup canned quartered artichoke hearts, drained and chopped**
- **4 ounces baby spinach**
- **½ teaspoon salt**
- **¼ teaspoon black pepper**
- **6 slices marbled rye bread**
- **1¼ cups shredded Monterey Jack cheese**
- **¼ cup finely shredded Parmesan cheese**
- **2 tablespoons sour cream**

1 In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet heat 1 teaspoon butter over medium heat. Add garlic; cook and stir 30 seconds or until fragrant. Add artichokes and spinach; season with salt and pepper. Cook just until spinach is wilted, stirring occasionally.

2 To assemble sandwiches, on 3 bread slices layer half each of the Monterey Jack cheese and Parmesan cheese and all of the spinach-artichoke mixture. Top with tiny spoonfuls of sour cream and the remaining Monterey Jack and Parmesan cheeses. Place remaining bread slices on top. Spread both sides of sandwiches with remaining 2 tablespoons butter.

3 Wipe out skillet with paper towels; heat skillet over medium-low heat. Arrange sandwiches in skillet. (If sandwiches do not fit, cook in two batches.) Cook sandwiches, covered, 5 minutes or until bottoms are golden. Using a wide spatula, carefully turn sandwiches over and cook, covered, 5 minutes or until toasted and cheese is melted.

4 Cut sandwiches in half and serve immediately.



ITALIAN HAM AND CHEESE PANINI WITH SUN-DRIED TOMATO AÏOLI

PREP 20 minutes **COOK** 6 minutes per batch **SERVES** 4 to 6

For country-style panini, use 2- or 3-inch high Italian bread, split and stuffed with salami, cheese and sun-dried tomato aïoli. If you don't have a panini or grill pan, cook the sandwiches in a cast-iron skillet with another heavy skillet on top, pressing down on the sandwiches. For extra weight, place a few unopened cans of food in the top skillet.

SUN-DRIED TOMATO AÏOLI

- ½ cup mayonnaise
- ¼ cup oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, drained
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ teaspoon Italian seasoning
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper

PANINI

- 1 loaf rustic Italian bread, such as ciabatta or *pane rustica*
- 12 ounces sliced mozzarella cheese
- 8 ounces thinly sliced honey ham
- 4 ounces thinly sliced Genoa salami
- 3 tablespoons butter, softened

1 For aïoli, in a food processor or blender combine mayonnaise, sun-dried tomatoes, garlic, Italian seasoning and pepper. Cover; process or blend until smooth.

2 Cut bread loaf horizontally in half. Spread cut sides with aïoli. On bottom half, layer half of the mozzarella and all of the ham and salami. Top with remaining mozzarella. Place top half of bread loaf on top to enclose. Cut sandwich loaf crosswise into individual sandwiches.

3 Spread half of the butter on the outside tops of sandwiches. Carefully turn sandwiches over and spread remaining butter on outside bottoms.

4 Heat a double-burner cast-iron grill or grill pan over medium heat. Place sandwiches on grill. (If using a grill pan and sandwiches do not fit, cook in batches.) Cook, pressing down on sandwiches with a cast-iron panini or grill press, 3 to 4 minutes or until bottoms are golden. Carefully turn sandwiches over. Cook, pressing down with a cast-iron panini or grill press, 3 to 4 minutes or until toasted and cheese is melted. Serve immediately.

CHEDDAR-AND-ONION BEER BURGERS

PREP 2 minutes **COOK** 1 hour 12 minutes **SERVES** 4

Beer adds rich, earthy flavor to the burgers and onion topping. Use a lager as opposed to ale—it has a lower alcohol content with smoother, crisp flavor.

ONION COMPOTE

1¼ cups lager beer
½ cup packed light brown sugar
½ cup water
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon black pepper
2 medium red onions, sliced

BURGERS

2 pounds ground beef
¼ cup lager beer
2 tablespoons Montreal Steak® seasoning
½ cup shredded cheddar cheese
Vegetable oil
4 sesame-topped hamburger buns or Kaiser rolls, split and toasted
4 red leaf lettuce leaves

1 For onion compote, in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet combine beer, brown sugar, water, salt and pepper. Stir in onions. Bring mixture to boil over medium heat. Reduce heat to low. Simmer, uncovered, 1 hour or until mixture reduces to 2 cups, stirring occasionally. Transfer compote to a bowl to cool.

2 For burgers, in a large bowl gently combine ground beef, beer and steak seasoning. Divide meat mixture into eight portions; shape into ¼- inch- thick patties. Place cheese in centers of four patties. Top with remaining patties; pinch edges together to seal.

3 Wipe out skillet with paper towels. Lightly brush skillet with oil; heat on medium-high heat. Cook burgers 6 to 8 minutes on each side or until thermometer inserted near centers of meat portions of burgers (not touching cheese) registers 160°F.

4 To serve, line bottoms of buns with lettuce leaves; top with burgers and onion compote. Place tops of buns on top.

Cheese makes burgers even better

MUSHROOM AND SWISS TURKEY BURGERS WITH CHIPOTLE KETCHUP

PREP 20 minutes **COOK** 52 minutes **STAND** 30 minutes **SERVES** 4

For a tasty twist on the much-loved mushroom-Swiss burger, top these juicy turkey burgers with your favorite mixture of mushrooms and a homemade smoky chipotle ketchup.

CHIPOTLE KETCHUP

½ cup ketchup
1-2 tablespoons finely chopped canned chipotle peppers in adobe sauce
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
¼ teaspoon black pepper

MUSHROOM TOPPING

2 tablespoons canola oil
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
12 ounces assorted mushrooms (such as cremini, oyster, chanterelle and stemmed shiitake), chopped
⅓ cup finely chopped yellow onion
Salt and black pepper
1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme leaves
2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves

BURGERS

1½ pounds ground turkey breast
Salt and black pepper
Canola oil
4 slices Swiss cheese
4 whole wheat hamburger buns, split and toasted

1 For chipotle ketchup, in a small bowl combine ketchup, chipotle peppers, salt and pepper. Cover and refrigerate at least 30 minutes before serving or up to 3 days.

2 For mushroom topping, in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet heat oil and butter over medium-high heat until nearly smoking. Add the mushrooms; cook 5 minutes or until tender. Add the onion; season with salt and pepper. Continue cooking 5 minutes or until mushrooms are golden and onion is tender. Stir in thyme and parsley. Transfer mixture to a bowl; set aside.

3 For burgers, divide meat into four portions; shape into ¾-inch-thick patties. Using your thumb, make a 1-inch-wide indentation in the center of each patty. Season both sides of burgers with salt and pepper.

4 Wipe out skillet with paper towels. Lightly brush skillet with oil; heat skillet over medium-high heat. Place patties in skillet with indentation sides up. Cook 12 to 16 minutes or until thermometer inserted near centers registers 165°F, turning once and topping with cheese the last minute during cooking.

5 To serve, place burgers on bottoms of buns; top with mushrooms. Spread chipotle ketchup on tops of buns and place on top.

QUICK BBQ CHICKEN PIZZA

PRE-PREP 30 minutes **PREP** 20 minutes **BAKE** 14 minutes **STAND** 8 minutes **SERVES** 4

Skip take-out or delivery and make this tasty BBQ pizza at home. It's easy when you start with a ready-made pizza crust and cook it on a cast-iron baking or pizza pan. The cast-iron pan mimics the hot ovens at pizza restaurants to produce a well-browned, crispy crust.

2	**boneless, skinless chicken breast halves (6 to 8 ounces each)**
½	**teaspoon garlic salt**
¼	**teaspoon black pepper**
2	**tablespoons olive oil**
½	**cup hickory-flavor barbecue sauce**
1	**cup shredded mozzarella cheese (4 ounces)**
1	**cup shredded smoked Gouda cheese (4 ounces)**
1	**12-inch ready-made pizza crust**
¾	**cup thinly sliced red onion**
1	**green onion with top, chopped**
2	**tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro**

1 Position rack in center of oven; place a 14-inch-round cast-iron baking or pizza pan on rack. Preheat oven to 450°F. Heat baking pan in oven 30 minutes while preheating oven.

2 Pat moisture from chicken with paper towels; sprinkle with garlic salt and pepper.

3 In a 10-inch cast-iron skillet heat oil over medium-high heat. Add chicken to skillet; cook 15 to 18 minutes or until a thermometer inserted near centers registers 165°F. Transfer chicken to a cutting board; let rest 5 minutes.

4 Cut chicken crosswise into ⅓-inch-wide slices. Transfer chicken to a medium bowl. Add ¼ cup barbecue sauce; toss until evenly coated.

5 To assemble pizza, evenly spread half of each mozzarella and Gouda cheeses on pizza crust. Arrange chicken slices on top. Sprinkle red onion over chicken. Drizzle with remaining ¼ cup barbecue sauce. Sprinkle remaining mozzarella and Gouda cheeses and green onion.

6 Carefully transfer pizza to hot baking pan. Bake 14 minutes or until bottom of crust is crisp and cheese is melted. Sprinkle with cilantro. Let pizza stand 3 minutes before cutting and serving.

TURKEY, PEAR AND BRIE PANINI

PREP 10 minutes **COOK** 8 minutes per batch **SERVES** 4

Pear slices mingle with turkey and Brie between bread slices for a sweet and savory sandwich filling. As the seasons change, switch the fruit to apples in late fall, cranberry sauce for the holidays and fresh mango and peach slices in spring and summer.

8	**slices whole grain bread**
8	**ounces Brie, cut into thin slices**
8	**ounces thinly sliced roasted turkey**
½	**teaspoon coarse kosher salt**
¼	**teaspoon black pepper**
2	**large pears, cored and sliced**
3	**ounces baby arugula**
2	**tablespoons olive or canola oil**

1 To assemble sandwiches, on four slices of bread layer Brie and turkey; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Top each with pear slices and arugula. Place remaining bread slices on top. Brush both sides of sandwiches with oil.

2 Heat a double-burner cast-iron grill or grill pan over medium heat. Reduce heat to medium-low. Place sandwiches on grill. (If using a grill pan and sandwiches do not fit, cook in batches.) Cook, pressing down on sandwiches with a cast-iron panini or grill press, 4 to 5 minutes or until bottoms are golden. Carefully turn sandwiches over. Cook, pressing down with a cast-iron panini or grill press, 4 to 5 minutes or until toasted and cheese is melted.

3 Cut sandwiches in half and serve immediately.

Mile-high and full of flavor

DEEP-DISH STUFFED PEPPERONI PIZZA

PREP 30 minutes **BAKE** 24-28 minutes **STAND** 5 minutes **SERVES** 8 ●

Save time by using refrigerated pizza dough and jarred pizza sauce, so you can make this cheesy, gooey comfort food any night of the week. To make it meatless, omit the sausage and pepperoni and season the spinach mixture more generously with salt.

2	**(14-ounce) packages refrigerated pizza dough (at room temperature)**
1	**tablespoon olive oil**
12	**ounces mild or spicy bulk Italian sausage**
½	**yellow onion, chopped**
8	**ounces frozen spinach, thawed and drained**
	Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
4	**cups shredded mozzarella cheese, divided**
1	**(14-ounce) jar pizza sauce, divided**
¼	**teaspoon dried oregano**
¼	**teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (optional)**
¼	**cup grated Parmesan cheese**
	Pepperoni slices
	Chopped parsley, for serving (optional)

1 Preheat oven to 450°F.

2 On a lightly floured work surface or piece of parchment paper, roll out 1 sheet of dough to a circle about 16 inches in diameter. Roll out second sheet of dough to a circle about 13 inches in diameter. Set aside to rest. (Resting makes the dough easier to stretch and shape.)

3 In a medium frying pan over medium heat, warm oil. Add sausage and cook until browned and no longer pink in the center, breaking it up with a wooden spoon as it cooks, about 4 minutes. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate. Add onion to pan and cook until soft and translucent, 3-4 minutes. Add spinach, season with salt and pepper, and cook until all the water has evaporated from the spinach, about 1 minute. Remove from heat and let cool.

4 Lightly coat the bottom of a 12-inch cast-iron skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Carefully fold the larger dough round in half, and then in half again to make quarters. Place in center of prepared pan; unfold dough. Gently press dough to fit bottom and up sides of pan, letting dough hang over the top edges of skillet slightly.

5 Sprinkle 1 ½ cups mozzarella cheese evenly over dough. Top with sausage, spinach mixture, ¾ cup sauce, oregano and red pepper flakes (if using). Sprinkle with 1 ½ cups mozzarella cheese.

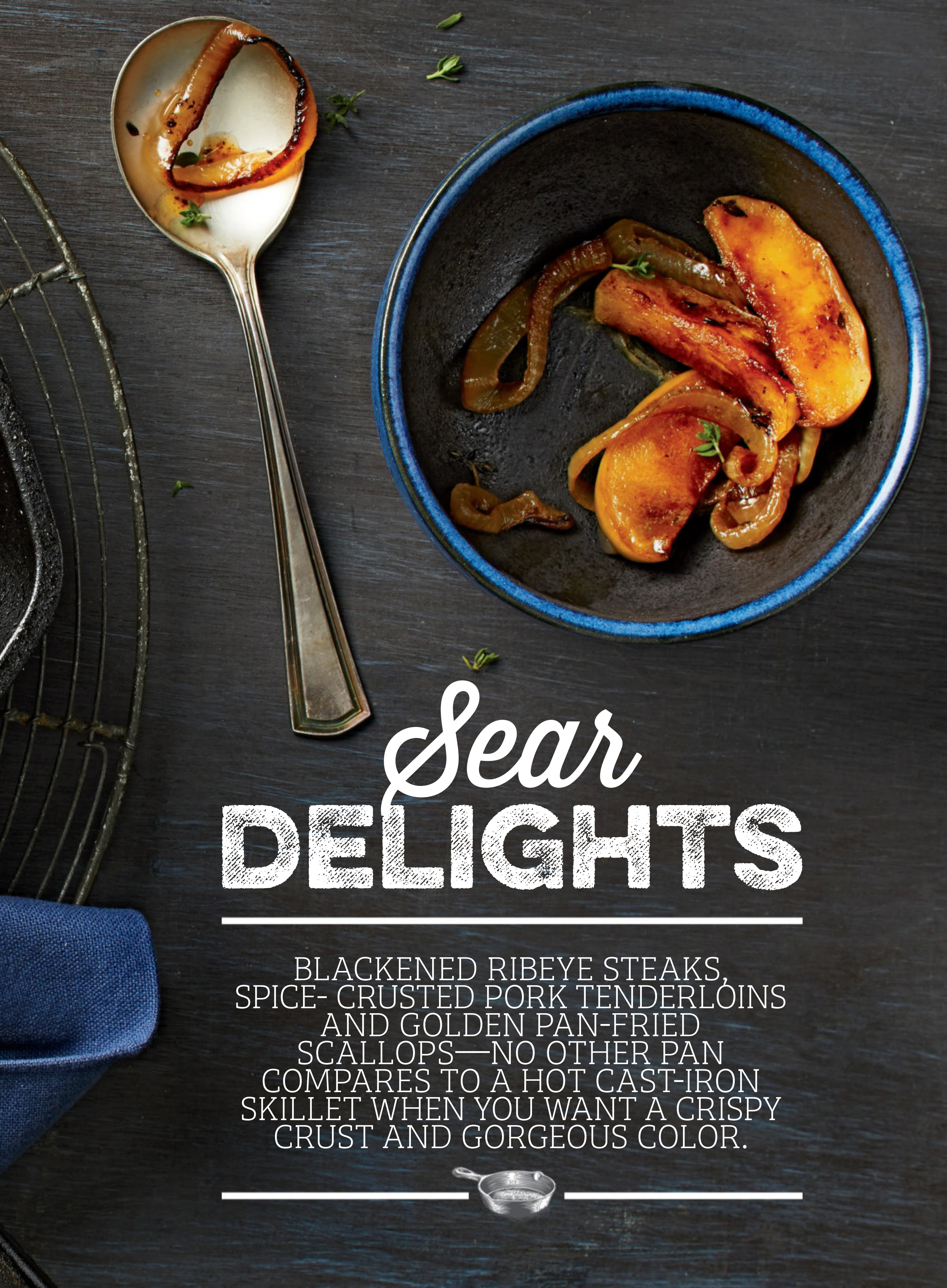
6 Fold remaining dough into quarters and place in center of skillet on top of filling; unfold dough to cover filling completely. Fold the overhanging dough edges over the top piece of dough, then gently roll and twist dough sheets together to seal (this will form the crust). Using a sharp knife, cut 6 small slits in the center of the top sheet of dough.

7 Bake until dough starts to crisp and brown lightly, 12 minutes. Remove from oven. Spread remaining ¾ cup sauce evenly over top of dough, leaving the crust bare. Top with Parmesan, remaining 1 cup mozzarella cheese and pepperoni. Bake until cheese is melted, bubbly and brown, 12-16 minutes longer.

8 Let cool in pan 5 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley, if desired, then slice into wedges.

* Store-bought pizza sauces vary in level of seasoning. Taste yours for salt, adding more, if needed, to adjust a lightly seasoned sauce.

Pork Chops with Caramelized Onion and Apple, *page 37*



Sear DELIGHTS

BLACKENED RIBEYE STEAKS, SPICE- CRUSTED PORK TENDERLOINS AND GOLDEN PAN-FRIED SCALLOPS—NO OTHER PAN COMPARES TO A HOT CAST-IRON SKILLET WHEN YOU WANT A CRISPY CRUST AND GORGEOUS COLOR.

SPICE-CRUSTED PORK TENDERLOIN

PREP 15 minutes **COOK** 2 minutes **ROAST** 18 minutes **STAND** 3 minutes **SERVES** 4

Spicy, crusty and oh so juicy—these simple steps for searing then roasting keep the tenderloin moist and flavorful.

- **1 1- to 1½-pound pork tenderloin**
- **½ teaspoon coarse kosher salt**
- **½ teaspoon garlic powder**
- **½ teaspoon ground cumin**
- **¼ teaspoon ground ginger**
- **¼ teaspoon black pepper**
- **⅛ teaspoon cayenne pepper**
- **⅛ teaspoon paprika**
- **Pinch ground allspice**
- **1 tablespoon plus ½ teaspoon canola oil**

1 Preheat oven to 425°F. If necessary, trim and discard silvery skin from pork. Pat moisture from pork with paper towels.

2 In a prep dish or custard cup combine salt, garlic powder, cumin, ginger, black and cayenne peppers, paprika and allspice. Rub ½ teaspoon oil over pork tenderloin. Sprinkle and rub with seasoning mixture.

3 In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium-high heat until simmering. Carefully add tenderloin and cook 2 to 4 minutes or until browned on all sides.

4 Transfer tenderloin in skillet to oven. Roast 18 to 25 minutes or until thermometer inserted near center registers 145°F. Transfer pork tenderloin to cutting board. Loosely cover with foil; let rest 3 minutes. Carve into ½-inch-thick slices to serve.

BLACKENED RIBEYE WITH HORSERADISH SAUCE

PREP 25 minutes **COOK** 6 minutes **STAND** 3 minutes **SERVES** 4 [redacted]

This blackening seasoning will light up your palate. It not only complements beef but also adds an extra peppery zest to chicken and pork.

BLACKENING SEASONING

1 teaspoon coarse kosher salt
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon onion powder
1 teaspoon paprika
1 teaspoon dried thyme
1 teaspoon fennel seeds
½ teaspoon ground white pepper
½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
½ teaspoon black pepper

STEAKS

4 boneless ribeye or bone-in rib steaks, ¾-inch thick
2 to 3 tablespoons olive oil
Horseradish Sauce

1 For seasoning mixture, in a small bowl combine salt, garlic powder, onion powder, paprika, thyme, fennel seeds and white, cayenne and black peppers.

2 Pat moisture from steaks with paper towels. Brush both sides of steaks with olive oil. Coat each side of steaks with about 1 teaspoon seasoning mixture. If necessary, slightly rub and press seasoning mixture into steaks.

3 In a well-ventilated area, heat a double-burner cast-iron griddle or 12-inch cast-iron skillet over high heat 5 minutes or until very hot.

4 Carefully place steaks on griddle. Cook 6 to 10 minutes or until thermometer inserted near centers registers 145°F for medium-rare doneness or to desired doneness, turning halfway through cooking. Transfer steaks to cutting board; let rest 3 minutes before serving. Serve with Horseradish Sauce.

HORSERADISH SAUCE In a small bowl combine ½ cup mayonnaise, ¼ cup sour cream, 3 tablespoons refrigerated prepared horseradish, 1 teaspoon finely shredded lemon peel, 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice, 1 tablespoon thinly sliced (or finely chopped) green onion and ½ teaspoon coarse kosher salt.

SEARED CHICKEN WITH ORANGE-POMEGRANATE SALSA

PREP 30 minutes **COOK** 3 minutes **ROAST** 15 minutes **STAND** 3 minutes **SERVES** 4

A hint of coriander seasons the chicken to give it a light citrusy note that pairs nicely with the fruitiness of the salsa.

1 teaspoon coarse kosher salt
1 teaspoon ground coriander
½ teaspoon garlic powder
½ teaspoon black pepper
4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts halves (6 to 8 ounces each)
1 tablespoon canola oil
Orange-Pomegranate Salsa

1 Preheat oven to 375°F. In a large resealable plastic bag combine salt, coriander, garlic powder and pepper. Close bag to seal; shake to mix.

2 Pat moisture from chicken with paper towels. Add one or two chicken breast halves to plastic bag with seasoning; close bag to seal. Shake until chicken is evenly coated with seasoning mixture. Transfer coated chicken to a plate. Repeat with remaining chicken pieces.

3 In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet heat oil over medium-high heat until shimmering. Carefully add chicken and cook 3 to 4 minutes or until browned on both sides, turning once.

4 Transfer chicken in skillet to oven. Roast 15 to 20 minute or until a thermometer inserted near centers registers 165°F. Transfer chicken to a platter; let rest 3 minute before serving. Serve with salsa.

ORANGE-POMEGRANATE SALSA

In a medium bowl combine 1 cup cut-up fresh orange sections, ½ cup pomegranate seeds, ⅓ cup chopped sweet white onion, 2 tablespoons seeded and minced jalapeño chile pepper, 1 to 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro, 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice, ¼ teaspoon salt and ⅛ teaspoon black pepper.

PORK CHOPS WITH CARAMELIZED ONION AND APPLE

PREP 15 minutes **COOK** 10 minutes **ROAST** 20 minutes **STAND** 3 minutes **SERVES** 2

Celebrate the fruits of fall with this apple-icious dish. Use Rome or Braeburn as both of these red varieties hold their shape and have a nice flavor when cooked.

2 bone-in pork ribeye chops or top loin chops, 1¼- to 1½-inch thick
Salt and black pepper
1 to 2 tablespoons canola oil

CARAMELIZED ONION-APPLE TOPPING
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 apple, cored and cut into ½-inch slices
1 small sweet onion, cut into ¼-inch slices and separated into rings
1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme

1 Preheat oven to 375°F. Pat moisture from pork chops with paper towels. Lightly season chops with salt and pepper.

2 To cook chops, lightly brush a 10-inch cast-iron grill pan* with oil. Heat over medium-high heat until hot. Add pork chops and cook 4 to 5 minutes or until nicely seared with grill marks, turning once.

3 Transfer chops in grill pan to oven. Roast 20 to 30 minutes or until thermometer inserted near centers registers 145°F. Transfer chops to a platter or dinner plates; let rest 3 minutes before serving.

4 While chops are roasting, for topping, in a large skillet melt butter over medium heat. Add the apple slices, onion rings and thyme. Cook 6 minutes or until apple and onion are caramelized, stirring occasionally. Serve over chops.

***** To cook chops in cast-iron skillet, heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium-high heat until shimmering. Carefully add chops; cook 4 to 5 minutes or until browned. Transfer chops in skillet to oven. Roast and serve as directed.

HERBED BALSAMIC LAMB CHOPS

PREP 15 minutes **COOK** 13 minutes **STAND** 15 minutes **SERVES** 2

Here's a special meal—just for two! Tiny chops are encrusted with an herb coating and drizzled with a sweet-savory sauce. Serve with a tossed salad or side of polenta or garlic mashed potatoes.

4	**lamb rib chops, ¾-inch thick**
¾	**teaspoon dried rosemary**
½	**teaspoon dried thyme**
½	**teaspoon dried marjoram**
¼	**teaspoon dried basil**
¼	**teaspoon coarse kosher salt**
⅛	**teaspoon black pepper**
1	**tablespoon canola oil**
2	**tablespoons minced shallots**
¼	**cup aged balsamic vinegar**
½	**cup chicken broth**
1	**tablespoon unsalted butter**

1 Pat moisture from lamb chops. In a prep dish or custard cup combine rosemary, thyme, marjoram, basil, salt and pepper. Sprinkle and rub on both sides of chops with seasoning mixture. Let stand at room temperature 15 minutes.

2 In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet heat oil over medium-high heat until shimmering. Carefully add chops; cook 7 to 10 minutes or until thermometer inserted near centers registers 145°F for medium-rare doneness, turning once. Transfer chops to a warm platter; loosely cover with foil to keep warm.

3 Add shallots to skillet. Cook and stir 1 minute or just until golden. Add vinegar; scrape and stir brown bits from bottom of skillet with wooden spoon or spatula. Stir in chicken broth. Cook over medium-high heat 5 minutes or until reduced by half, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat. Stir in butter. Pour sauce over chops; serve.

Simple, yet so delicious

Cast-Iron
COOKING SCHOOL

PAN-SEARING STEAKS & CHOPS

Cooking restaurant-quality steaks, chops and even blackened fish at home is a cinch with a cast-iron skillet. Unlike other types of cookware, once a cast-iron skillet is super hot, it holds the heat to create a delicious caramelized crust that also seals in the juices.

HOW TO

For sizzling steakhouse-style steaks and chops, use a two-stage method: Pan-sear the steaks or chops on top of the stove, then move the skillet to the oven and continue cooking to the desired doneness.

1 Start with quality meat and select cuts suitable for pan-broiling and grilling. Porterhouse, ribeye, strip, tenderloin and top sirloin are suggested beef choices. For the most flavorful pork chops, use bone-in chops 1 to 1½ inches thick.

2 Pat moisture from surface of meat with paper towels.

3 Season both sides of steaks or chops.

4 Add oil to a well-seasoned skillet; heat over medium-high heat until oil is shimmering.

5 Carefully add steaks or chops to skillet. Sear or brown meat 2 to 3 minutes on each side.

6 Move steaks or chops in the skillet to a preheated 350°F oven. Continue cooking until steak or chops are 130°F for rare, 135°F for medium-rare, 155°F for medium and 165°F for well done.

7 Transfer steaks or chops to a clean platter or cutting board. Loosely cover with foil; let rest 5 minutes. The internal temperature will continue to rise 5°F to 10°F.

6 TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Let meats stand at room temperature 15 to 20 minutes before cooking.
- Remove as much moisture as possible from the surface of the meat. Excess moisture on the surface needs to first evaporate before browning can begin.
- Add 1 to 3 teaspoons of oil to the skillet when searing lean cuts, such as pork loin chops and chicken breasts. Use peanut, sunflower, vegetable or canola oil with higher smoke points.
- Use a pan large enough to hold the meat. Leave a small amount of space between the pieces. This is especially important when browning cubed meat to prevent steaming instead of searing.
- Place roasts with fat sides down in the skillet and chicken pieces with skin sides down.
- Sear the meat on one side first before flipping large pieces over or stirring smaller cubed pieces.

The Finishing Touch A pat of herb butter is a simple but elegant topping for seared steaks. Combine 4 tablespoons butter with 1 tablespoon minced shallot and 2 tablespoons minced chives, tarragon, rosemary or chervil.

LEMON-GARLIC SEA SCALLOPS

PREP 20 minutes **COOK** 3 minutes **SERVES** 4

Pan-seared scallops topped with a lemony butter sauce is an easy and elegant dish for entertaining during the week, or whenever you feel like treating yourself to a special meal. Be sure the scallops are extra-dry to create a pretty and perfectly caramelized crust.

SCALLOPS

- **1 pound fresh sea scallops**
- **Sea salt and black pepper**
- **2 teaspoons unsalted butter**
- **2 teaspoons olive oil**
- **2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives**

LEMON-BUTTER SAUCE

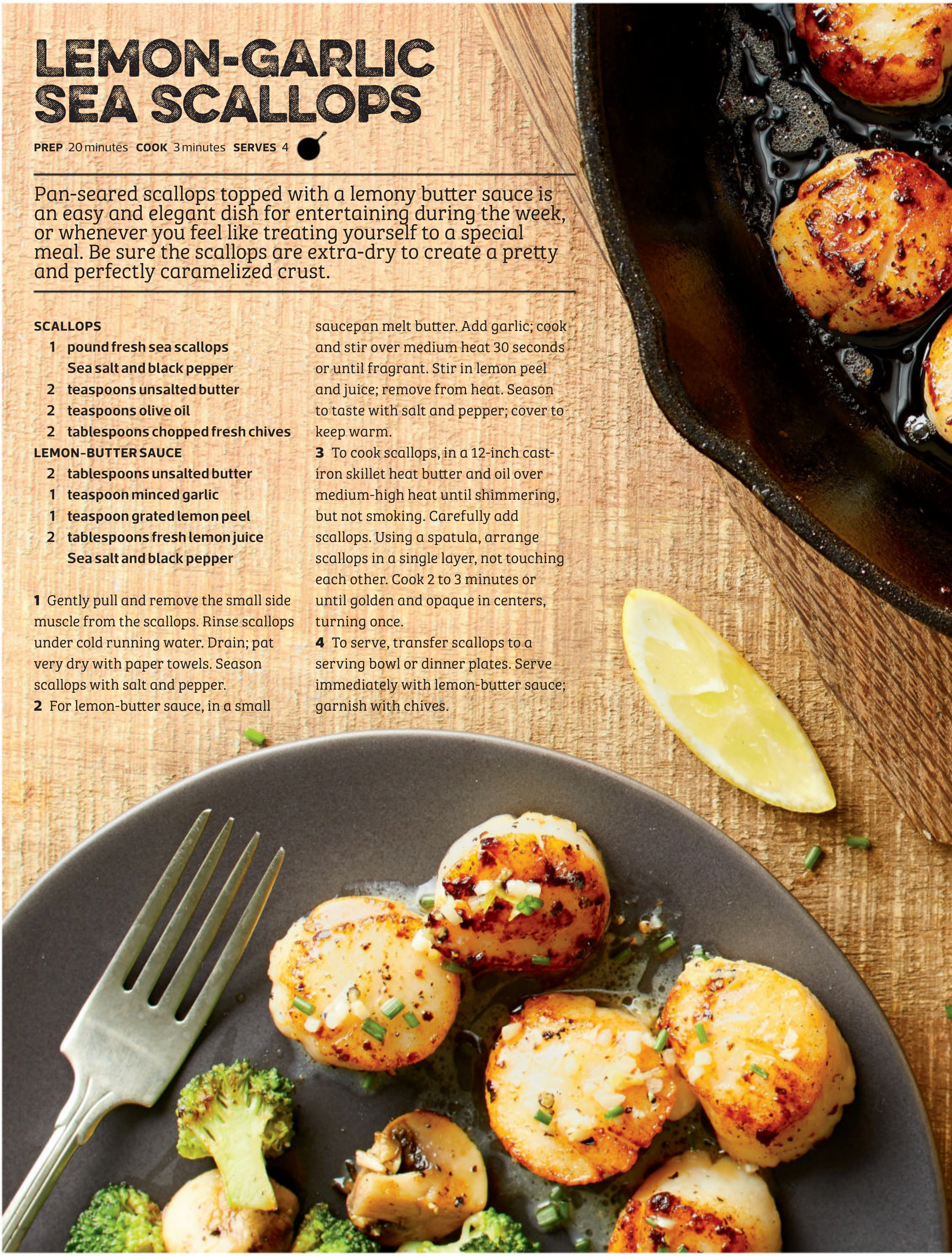
- **2 tablespoons unsalted butter**
- **1 teaspoon minced garlic**
- **1 teaspoon grated lemon peel**
- **2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice**
- **Sea salt and black pepper**

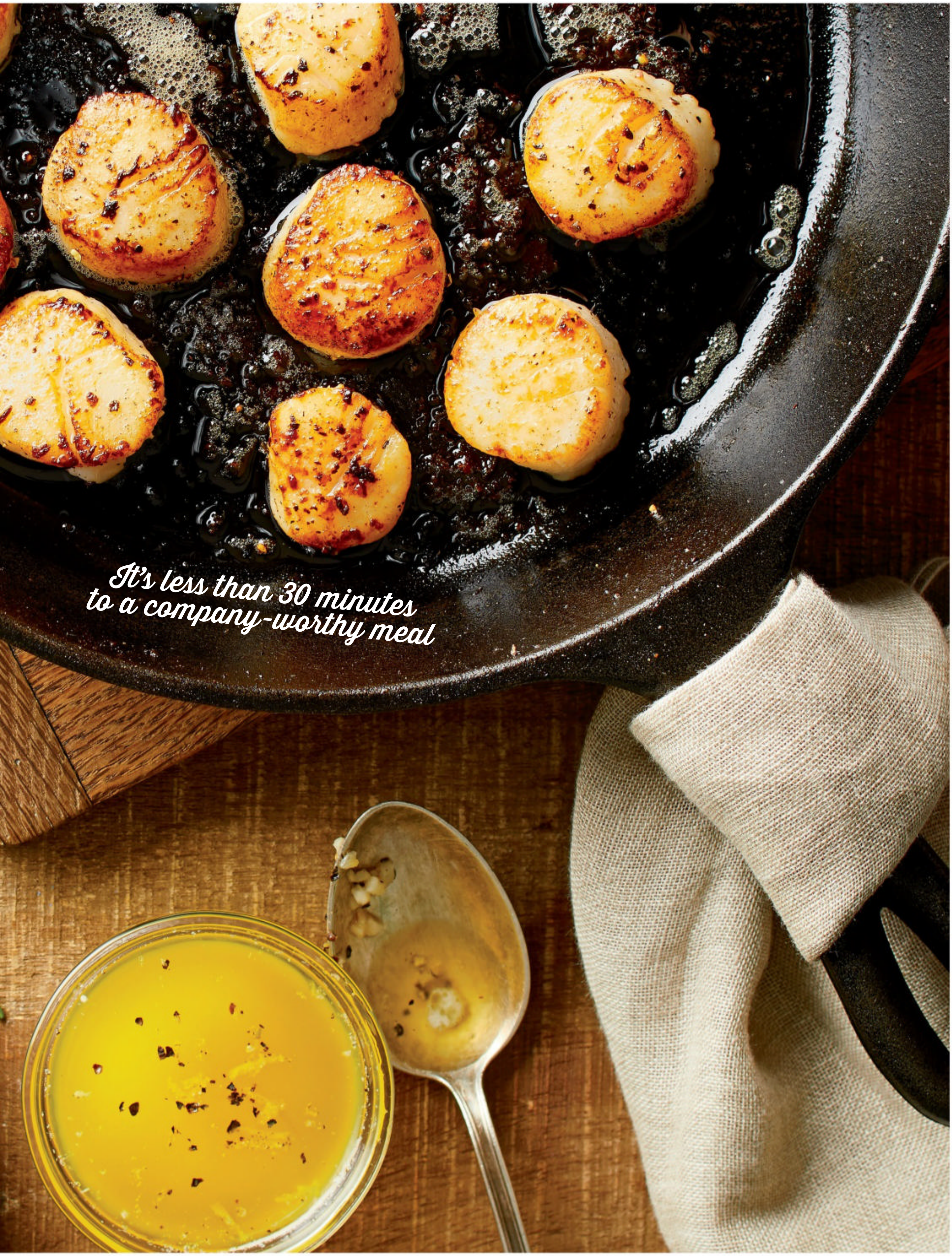
1 Gently pull and remove the small side muscle from the scallops. Rinse scallops under cold running water. Drain; pat very dry with paper towels. Season scallops with salt and pepper.

2 For lemon-butter sauce, in a small saucepan melt butter. Add garlic; cook and stir over medium heat 30 seconds or until fragrant. Stir in lemon peel and juice; remove from heat. Season to taste with salt and pepper; cover to keep warm.

3 To cook scallops, in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet heat butter and oil over medium-high heat until shimmering, but not smoking. Carefully add scallops. Using a spatula, arrange scallops in a single layer, not touching each other. Cook 2 to 3 minutes or until golden and opaque in centers, turning once.

4 To serve, transfer scallops to a serving bowl or dinner plates. Serve immediately with lemon-butter sauce; garnish with chives.





It's less than 30 minutes to a company-worthy meal

Mediterranean Shrimp and Peppers, *page 52*

One-Pot SUPPERS

ALL OF THESE FAMILY-PLEASING STOVETOP MEALS— INCLUDING STROGANOFF, SPAGHETTI AND CHICKEN-AND-SEAFOOD PAELLA—GO FROM START TO DELICIOUS IN A SINGLE PAN, MAKING CLEANUP A BREEZE.

CREAMY BEEF STROGANOFF

PREP 20 minutes **COOK** 20 minutes **SERVES** 4

Pair this never-out-of-style classic with a crisp green salad to contrast the rich flavors of the dish.

8 ounces boneless beef top loin (strip) steak, ½- to ¾-inch thick
½ teaspoon coarse kosher salt
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
8 ounces mushrooms, quartered
1 small white onion, finely chopped
2 cups reduced-sodium beef broth
1 cup water
2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon dried thyme
8 ounces wide egg noodles
½ cup sour cream

1 Thinly slice steak across the grain, then cut slices into bite-size pieces. Pat moisture from steak with paper towels. Sprinkle steak with salt.

2 In a 10-inch cast-iron skillet heat oil over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add steak; cook and stir just until browned. Transfer steak to a plate.

3 Reduce heat to medium. Add mushrooms; cook 5 minutes, stirring often. Add onion; cook 5 minutes or until onions are nearly tender, stirring often.

4 Add broth, water, Worcestershire sauce and thyme. Bring to a boil over high heat, scraping brown bits from bottom of skillet with wooden spoon or spatula. Add noodles; reduce heat and cook according to package instructions, stirring occasionally to ensure noodles cook evenly. Remove from heat.

5 Immediately stir in steak and sour cream. Heat just until warm; serve.

Cook up some comfort food tonight

CHEESY GROUND BEEF SPAGHETTI

PREP 15 minutes **COOK** 14 minutes **BROIL** 2 minutes **SERVES** 4

The spaghetti is cooked in the skillet with the sauce in this less-mess, quick-to-fix one-dish meal.

1	tablespoon olive oil
¾	cup chopped yellow onion
3	cloves garlic, minced
1	teaspoon salt
½	teaspoon black pepper
1	pound lean ground beef
1	28-ounce can diced tomatoes, drained
1	teaspoon dried parsley flakes
1	teaspoon Italian seasoning
¼	teaspoon sugar
2	cups water
8	ounces dried thin spaghetti, broken in half
2	cups shredded Italian cheese blend

1 In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet heat oil over medium heat. Add onion, garlic, salt and pepper; cook 4 minutes or until nearly tender, stirring occasionally. Add the ground beef and cook until browned. Drain and discard fat drippings.

2 Preheat oven broiler. Stir tomatoes, parsley, Italian seasoning and sugar into ground beef mixture. Stir in water. Add spaghetti, pushing pasta into mixture to cover with sauce. Bring mixture to gentle boil, cooking uncovered 9 to 11 minutes or until pasta is al dente. Stir occasionally to prevent pasta from sticking together.

3 Top with cheese. Broil 4 inches from heat 2 to 3 minutes until cheese is melted and beginning to brown.

SOUTHERN BUTTERMILK FRIED CHICKEN

PREP 30 minutes **MARINATE** 2 hours **STAND** 10 minutes
FRY 12 minutes per batch **SERVES** 6

This old-fashioned Southern-style fried chicken is marinated in buttermilk brine, then dredged in flour for tender, flavorful meat with a crispy crust. Buttermilk not only adds a delicious flavor but also tenderizes.

BUTTERMILK BRINE

3 cups buttermilk
¼ cup hot pepper sauce
2 tablespoons coarse kosher salt
2 teaspoons black pepper
4 pounds bone-in meaty chicken breast halves, thighs and drumsticks

FLOUR DREDGE

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon onion powder
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon Old Bay® seasoning
1 teaspoon black pepper
½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
½ teaspoon paprika
Canola oil

1 For buttermilk brine, set a large resealable plastic bag in a large bowl. In the bag combine buttermilk, hot pepper sauce, salt and black pepper.

2 Using a chef's knife, cut chicken breast halves crosswise in half. Add all chicken pieces to brine; close bag to seal. Turn bag to evenly coat chicken with brine. Refrigerate 2 to 4 hours, turning bag occasionally.

3 For dredge, in another large resealable plastic bag combine flour, onion powder, garlic powder, Old Bay® seasoning, black pepper, cayenne and paprika. Close bag; shake to combine.

4 Set a cooling rack on a baking sheet. Working with one piece at a time, remove chicken from brine, letting excess drip back into the bag. Place in bag with flour mixture. Close bag; shake until evenly coated. Transfer the coated chicken to the rack and let stand for 30 minutes.

5 In a deep 12-inch cast-iron skillet* heat 1 inch oil to 350°F. Place another cooling rack on another baking sheet; line with paper towels.

6 Using tongs, carefully add a few pieces of chicken to the hot oil. Fry chicken 12 to 15 minutes or until golden and chicken is done (170°F for breasts; 175°F for thighs and drumsticks), turning once. Transfer fried chicken to paper-lined rack to drain.

***** If your skillet is less than 2 inches deep, fry the chicken in a cast-iron Dutch oven.

PORK AND SAUSAGE CASSOULET

PREP 25 minutes **COOK** 23 minutes **BROIL** 2 minutes **SERVES** 4

This hearty, rich stewlike dish can be made ahead and is actually even better the next day, after the flavors have had a chance to mingle. After simmering, cool and transfer to a covered container and refrigerate. To serve, transfer portions to smaller skillets. Bring to a boil, add the bread-crumb topping and broil until golden.

2	**tablespoons olive oil**
12	**ounces pork sausages**
12	**ounces pork tenderloin, cut into 1-inch cubes**
1	**medium white onion, chopped**
4	**cloves garlic, minced**
1	**28-ounce can whole peeled tomatoes, undrained**
1	**15-ounce can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed**
1	**cup chicken broth**
½	**teaspoon salt**
¼	**teaspoon black pepper**
1	**cup plain panko bread crumbs**
¼	**cup thinly sliced shallot**
1	**tablespoon olive oil**
1	**teaspoon dried thyme**
1	**teaspoon dried oregano leaves**

1 In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet heat oil over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add sausages; cook 2 minutes. Add pork slices; cook 1 minute or until the sausages are browned. Turn sausages and pork slices over and cook 3 minutes. If desired, remove and cut sausages into 1-inch pieces; return to skillet.

2 Push sausages and pork slices to side of skillet. Add onion to center of skillet. Cook 4 to 5 minutes or until onion is tender. Add 2 cloves minced garlic; cook 30 seconds.

3 Stir in undrained tomatoes, beans, broth, salt and pepper. Using a wooden spoon, slightly smash and break up tomatoes. Bring mixture to a simmer. Simmer, uncovered, 12 to 15 minutes or until slightly thickened.

4 Meanwhile, preheat oven broiler. In a small bowl combine remaining 2 cloves minced garlic, bread crumbs, shallot, olive oil, thyme and oregano.

5 Remove skillet from the heat; sprinkle with the bread crumb mixture. Broil 4 inches from heat 2 minutes or until crumb topping is golden.

SPANISH-STYLE PAELLA

PREP 45 minutes **COOK** 27 minutes **STAND** 5 minutes **SERVES** 4 to 6

One of the best ways to make paella without a paella pan is to use a cast-iron skillet. The ability of cast iron to hold heat helps in making the *socarrat*—the crusty, crispy bottom, one of the most important characteristics of a well-made paella.

12	**ounces fresh jumbo shrimp (21 to 25 per pound), peeled and deveined**
3	**tablespoons olive oil**
9	**cloves garlic, minced (4½ teaspoons)**
	Salt and black pepper
12	**ounces boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed and cut crosswise into thirds**
8	**ounces Spanish-style chorizo sausages, halved lengthwise and sliced ¼-inch thick**
1	**red bell pepper, finely chopped**
1	**medium white onion, finely chopped**
1¼	**cups Arborio rice**
½	**teaspoon saffron threads, crumbled**
1	**14.5-ounce can diced fire-roasted tomatoes, drained**
2¼	**cups chicken broth**
¼	**cup dry white wine**
12	**mussels, scrubbed and debearded**
½	**cup frozen peas**

1 In a medium bowl toss shrimp with 1 tablespoon oil and 1 teaspoon garlic. Lightly season with salt and pepper; set aside. Pat moisture from chicken with paper towels; lightly season with salt and pepper.

2 In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium heat until shimmering. Add chicken and cook until browned on both sides, turning once. Transfer to a bowl.

3 Heat remaining 1 tablespoon oil in skillet until shimmering. Add chorizo, bell pepper, onion and ¼ teaspoon salt. Cook 5 minutes or until onion is tender, stirring occasionally.

4 Stir in rice, saffron and remaining 3½ teaspoons garlic; cook and stir 30 seconds. Stir in tomatoes; cook 3 minutes or until slightly thickened. Remove skillet from heat. Stir in broth and wine. Return skillet to heat and cook, scraping brown bits from bottom of pan.

5 Bring mixture to a simmer. Nestle chicken into mixture. Reduce heat; cover and gently simmer 15 minutes or until liquid is nearly all absorbed and rice is al dente.

6 Insert mussels, hinged sides down, into rice (so they stand upright); arrange shrimp on top of rice. Cover and cook 3 to 6 minutes or until shrimp are opaque and mussels are open.

7 Turn off heat. Discard any mussels that did not open. Sprinkle peas on top; cover and let stand 5 minutes before serving.

BEEFY COWBOY BEANS

PREP 25 minutes **COOL** 10 minutes **BAKE** 1 hour **SERVES** 8

Smoky barbecue sauce adds a campfire taste to these Western-style beans. Cook them in the oven, on the stovetop or over an open fire.

- **8 ounces thick-cut sliced bacon, (diced)**
- **½ cup chopped yellow onion**
- **8 ounces lean ground beef**
- **½ cup mesquite or hickory smoke barbecue sauce**
- **⅓ cup packed light brown sugar**
- **¼ cup water, plus additional water if needed**
- **¼ cup ketchup**
- **2 tablespoons Dijon mustard**
- **2 tablespoons molasses**
- **2 teaspoons chili powder**
- **½ teaspoon garlic powder**
- **½ teaspoon salt**
- **¼ teaspoon pepper**
- **4 15-ounce cans beans, drained and rinsed (choose a variety of beans, such as pinto, kidney, navy, black and/or butter beans)**

1 Preheat oven to 350°F. In a 5-quart cast-iron Dutch oven cook bacon over medium heat 5 to 8 minutes until golden but not crisp, stirring occasionally. Add onion; cook 5 minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally. Using a slotted spoon, transfer bacon-onion mixture to a bowl.

2 Cook ground beef in bacon drippings until browned. Drain and discard dripping. Return bacon-onion mixture to Dutch oven. Stir in barbecue sauce, brown sugar, ¼ cup water, ketchup, mustard, molasses, chili powder, garlic powder, salt and pepper. Add beans; stir until combined.

3 Bake, covered, 1 hour.* If necessary, stir in a small amount of additional water for saucier beans and serve.

* To cook beans on stovetop, for Step 3, bring beans to a gentle simmer. Cover and very gently simmer 45 to 60 minutes. If necessary, add additional water for saucier beans.

TEXAS-STYLE CHILI

PREP 45 minutes **COOK** 4 hours 5 minutes **SERVES** 10 to 12

As they say, everything is bigger in the Lone Star State. This big-batch recipe is great for a potluck or tailgate party. A large cast-iron Dutch oven is ideal—it gets real hot for browning the beef while the thick walls hold the heat for cooking.

- **1 pound sliced bacon, chopped**
- **1 pound red onion, chopped**
- **1 heaping tablespoon minced garlic**
- **5 pounds boneless beef chuck roast, cut into ¾-inch cubes**
- **3 12-ounce bottles light-golden beer or 36 ounces apple juice, plus additional beer or apple juice**
- **1 28-ounce can diced tomatoes, undrained**
- **1 7-ounce can chipotle peppers in adobe sauce, chopped**
- **1 6-ounce can tomato paste**
- **⅓ cup chili powder**
- **1 tablespoon ground cumin**
- **1 tablespoon dried oregano leaves**
- **1 tablespoon salt**
- **1 tablespoon black pepper**
- **1 to 3 teaspoons cayenne pepper**
- **1 ounce unsweetened chocolate, coarsely chopped**
- **Shredded cheddar cheese, finely chopped fresh cilantro, sour cream and/or hot pepper sauce**

1 In an 8-quart cast-iron Dutch oven cook bacon, onion and garlic over medium heat 5 to 8 minutes until golden but not crisp, stirring occasionally. Using a slotted spoon, transfer bacon mixture to a large bowl.

2 Pat moisture from beef with paper towels. Working in small batches, brown beef in bacon drippings. Using a slotted spoon, transfer browned beef to bowl with bacon. After beef is browned, discard drippings.

3 Return bacon mixture and beef to Dutch oven. Add 3 bottles beer, undrained tomatoes, chipotle peppers in adobe sauce, tomato paste, chili powder, cumin, oregano, salt, black pepper, cayenne and chocolate. Stir until combined.

4 Bring mixture to a boil; reduce heat to low. Cover and gently simmer 4 hours or until beef is tender, stirring often. If chili becomes too thick, add additional beer or apple juice.

5 To serve, ladle chili into bowls. Top with cheese, cilantro, sour cream and/or hot sauce.

MEDITERRANEAN SHRIMP AND PEPPERS

PREP 25 minutes **COOK** 8 minutes **SERVES** 4

Smoked paprika gives this Spanish-style dish a wonderful, rich flavor with subtle smoky overtones.

- **1¼ pounds fresh or frozen jumbo shrimp, peeled and deveined (21 to 25 per pound)**
- **1 tablespoon all-purpose flour**
- **2 teaspoons smoked paprika**
- **½ teaspoon ground coriander**
- **½ teaspoon fine sea salt**
- **½ teaspoon black pepper**
- **¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper**
- **¼ cup olive oil**
- **3 small shallots, thinly sliced**
- **4 cloves garlic, minced**
- **1 cup sliced red and/or yellow bell peppers**
- **1 cup canned diced tomatoes, undrained**
- **⅓ cup chicken or vegetable broth**
- **2 tablespoons dry white wine**
- **2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice**
- **Hot cooked couscous**

1 Thaw shrimp if frozen. Peel and devein shrimp, leaving tails intact. Pat moisture from shrimp with paper towels; place shrimp in a large bowl. Combine flour, paprika, coriander, salt, black pepper and cayenne. Sprinkle flour mixture over shrimp; toss until shrimp is evenly coated.

2 In a 10-inch cast-iron skillet heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add shallots and garlic. Cook and stir 2 to 3 minutes or until fragrant. Add bell peppers. Cook 4 minutes or until bell peppers are nearly tender, stirring occasionally.

3 Push bell peppers from center of skillet. Add shrimp to center of skillet; cook and stir 1 minute. Add undrained tomatoes, broth, wine and lemon juice. Bring to simmer; gently simmer 1 to 2 minutes or just until shrimp are opaque. Serve immediately over couscous.

PORK FRIED BROWN RICE

PREP 25 minutes **COOK** 12 minutes **SERVES** 6

A cast-iron skillet is a good replacement for a wok. It can be heated to the very high temperatures required for successful stir-frying without burning.

PORK

1	tablespoon canola oil
1½	pounds boneless pork loin, cut into ½-inch bite-size pieces
½	cup chopped white onion
½	cup water
2	tablespoons soy sauce
2	tablespoons hoisin sauce
½	teaspoon ground ginger

FRIED RICE

1	tablespoon canola oil
2	eggs, slightly beaten
	Salt and black pepper
3	cups cooked long-grain brown rice
1	12-ounce package frozen mixed peas and carrots, thawed
1	tablespoon soy sauce
1	tablespoon hoisin sauce
½	cup green onions, chopped

Spice things up with crushed red pepper!

1 For pork, in a 10-inch cast-iron skillet heat oil over medium-high heat. Add pork and onion; cook and stir just until pork begins to brown and onion begins to soften. Stir in water, soy sauce, hoisin sauce and ground ginger. Bring to a simmer. Cover and gently simmer 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer mixture to a bowl. Carefully wipe out skillet with paper towels.

2 For fried rice, in the skillet heat oil over medium heat. Pour in eggs. As they begin to set, use a spatula to pull the eggs across the pan. Continue cooking and pulling the eggs until cooked. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

3 Increase heat to medium-high. Add rice, pork mixture and peas and carrots to eggs in skillet; gently toss with spatula until combined. Drizzle with soy and hoisin sauces. Cook and stir until heated.

4 Stir in green onions. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Remove from heat and serve.

Lemon-Sage Roasted Chicken,
page 63

Braising, STEWING & ROASTING

FROM LONG-SIMMER BRAISING SHORT RIBS TO ROASTING CHICKEN, CAST-IRON DUTCH OVEN COOKING IS PRIZED FOR TRANSFORMING HUMBLE MEATS INTO SENSATIONAL, FULL-FLAVOR MEALS.

SUNDAY POT ROAST WITH TOMATOES AND MUSHROOMS

PREP 40 minutes **COOK** 3 hours 30 minutes **STAND** 15 minutes **SERVES** 6 to 8

Take advantage of the weekend to make this hearty home-style meal. As the pot roast cooks in the oven, a delectable aroma fills the kitchen as this roast transforms into a succulent, tender feast for the family.

1	**3- to 4-pound beef chuck or shoulder pot roast**
	Salt and pepper
	Olive oil
2	**to 4 carrots, chopped**
1	**medium yellow onion, chopped**
1	**rib celery, chopped**
8	**ounces mushrooms, halved or quartered**
2	**teaspoons sugar**
2	**cloves garlic, minced**
1	**14.5-ounce can diced fire-roasted tomatoes**
1½	**cups water**
1	**cup beef broth**
½	**cup dry red wine**
1	**teaspoon dried thyme**

1 Preheat oven to 300°F. Pat moisture from roast with paper towels. Season with salt and pepper.

2 In a 5- to 6-quart cast-iron Dutch oven heat 1 to 2 tablespoons oil over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add roast and cook until browned on both sides, turning once. Transfer roast to a plate.

3 If necessary, add 1 tablespoon oil to Dutch oven. Add carrots, onion, celery and mushrooms; cook 5 to 7 minutes or until nearly tender, stirring occasionally. Add sugar and garlic; cook and stir 1 minute.

4 Remove Dutch oven from heat. Stir in undrained tomatoes, water, broth, red wine and thyme. Return roast to Dutch oven. Return Dutch oven to heat; bring mixture to a simmer.

5 Cover and cook in preheated oven 3½ to 4 hours until roast is very tender. Transfer roast to a cutting board. Loosely cover with foil; let rest 15 minutes. Carve across grain into slices or pieces; arrange meat on platter with vegetables. Serve cooking liquid as a sauce on the side.

BARBECUED SHORT RIBS

PREP 15 minutes **COOK** 3 hours 30 minutes **SERVES** 6

Just three steps are required to make these juicy, tender ribs with meat falling off the bone: season the ribs, add the sauce, then bake. Oh, and let's not forget the fourth step—enjoy!

4	**pounds beef short ribs, cut into 3-inch-long pieces**
	Salt and black pepper
2	**tablespoons canola oil**
1	**cup apple juice or cider**
⅔	**cup packed dark brown sugar**
⅔	**cup ketchup**
1	**tablespoon yellow mustard**
1	**tablespoon apple cider vinegar**
1	**teaspoon smoked paprika**
1	**teaspoon Worcestershire sauce**
½	**teaspoon garlic powder**
½	**teaspoon dried ground thyme**

1 Preheat oven to 300°F. Pat moisture from beef with paper towels. Season short ribs with salt and pepper.

2 In a 3-quart Dutch oven heat oil over medium-high heat. Brown ribs in batches. Discard drippings.

3 Return all ribs to Dutch oven. Add apple juice . Cover and cook in preheated oven 1½ to 2 hours or until nearly tender, rearranging ribs halfway during cooking.

4 Meanwhile, for sauce, in a small bowl combine brown sugar, ketchup, mustard, vinegar, paprika, Worcestershire sauce, garlic powder and thyme.

5 Drain and discard drippings in Dutch oven. Pour sauce over ribs; toss to coat evenly. Cook ,uncovered, in oven 20 to 30 minutes or until tender and slightly caramelized. Transfer ribs to a platter.

Sweet, sassy and lip-smacking ribs

ALE-BRAISED PORK SHOULDER WITH ROOT VEGETABLES

PREP 20 minutes **COOK** 3 hours 30 minutes **STAND** 15 minutes **SERVES** 4 to 6

Nothing says fall more than hearty slow-simmered meat with a medley of root vegetables. Serve with soft polenta or mashed potatoes to soak up the full-flavored cooking juices.

1 3-pound boneless pork shoulder roast, trimmed
Salt and black pepper
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 medium white onion, thinly sliced
1 carrot, chopped
1 medium turnip, chopped
1 medium rutabaga, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon tomato paste
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 12-ounce bottle ale beer
1 cup chicken broth
½ cup apple cider
1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
5 to 6 fresh sprigs thyme

1 Pat moisture from roast with paper towels. Generously season pork with salt and pepper. In a 5- or 6-quart cast-iron Dutch oven heat oil over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add pork and cook 10 minutes or until browned on all sides, turning occasionally. Transfer pork to a plate; set aside.

2 Preheat oven to 300°F. Discard all but 1 tablespoon drippings from Dutch oven. Add onion, carrot, turnip, rutabaga and garlic. Cook over medium-high heat 5 minutes or until vegetables are nearly tender.

3 Add tomato paste; cook and stir 2 minutes or until mixture appears slightly dry. Add flour; cook and stir 2 minutes.

4 Remove Dutch oven from heat; pour in beer. Return pan to heat; scrape brown bits from bottom of Dutch oven with wooden spoon or spatula. Cook 10 minutes or until mixture begins to thicken, stirring occasionally. Stir in the broth, cider, vinegar and thyme. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

5 Return pork to Dutch oven. Cover and cook in preheated oven 2 to 2½ hours. Uncover and continue cooking 1 hour or until pork is tender, basting frequently with braising liquid.

6 Transfer pork to a cutting board. Loosely cover with foil; let rest 15 minutes. Meanwhile, skim excess fat from surface of cooking liquid.

7 To serve, carve pork across the grain into thin slices. Arrange slices on a platter; spoon cooking juices and vegetables over top.

Cast-Iron COOKING SCHOOL

OVEN ROASTING VEGETABLES

With the arrival of autumn comes the harvest of hearty vegetables. Although there are many ways to prepare cool- weather veggies, roasting in a hot cast-iron pan is a wonderful way to enjoy their naturally sweet goodness.

HOW TO

Healthy eating has never tasted so good. The heat of a cast-iron pan jump-starts the caramelization process for super sweet veggies with golden, slightly charred outsides, while keeping the insides moist and tender.

1 Select vegetables suited for roasting; sort the vegetables by their cooking times.

Root vegetables (potatoes, parsnips, rutabaga, beets, carrots, onions): 30 to 35 minutes.

Winter squash (butternut, acorn, pumpkin, kabocha): 20 to 60 minutes.

Crucifers (broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts): 15 to 25 minutes.

2 Cut vegetables and lightly coat them with a small amount of oil in a large bowl. Season vegetables with salt, pepper and herbs.

3 Preheat oven to 425°F. Place a cast-iron roasting pan or large skillet in the oven to heat.

4 Carefully arrange the vegetables in the hot pan or skillet in a single layer without crowding.

5 Roast vegetables until golden brown and tender.

6 Transfer roasted vegetables to a serving platter.

7 TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Cut vegetables into the same length and width so they will cook evenly.
- Coat vegetables with oil, but don't drown them in oil. Use about 1 to 2 tablespoons of oil per pan of vegetables.
- Be aware if using red beets. To prevent beets from turning other vegetables pink, roast them in a separate cast-iron pan or skillet.
- Don't crowd vegetables in the pan or skillet. Make sure there is plenty of space between pieces for even browning.
- Halfway during roasting, use a spoon or spatula to move vegetable pieces around to encourage browning on all sides.
- Resist the urge to take the vegetables out too soon. They may be soft enough to eat, but they should also have a golden-brown, caramelized color for the best flavor.
- Check doneness by inserting the tip of a paring knife into a vegetable piece. If it easily slips in and out, the vegetables are done. If not, then roast the vegetables 5 minutes more and test again.

Balsamic Glaze The sweetness of roasted root veggies is complemented by the slight acidity and sweet-savory flavor of a balsamic glaze. Gently simmer ½ cup aged balsamic vinegar about 5 minutes, whisking frequently, until reduced by half. Arrange roasted vegetables on a platter and drizzle with the glaze before serving.

OLD-FASHIONED BEEF STEW

PREP 35 minutes **COOK** 1 hour 53 minutes **SERVES** 6

"Stew meat" comes from cuts of meat that are generally less tender, which benefit from a long simmer in liquid to become butter-knife tender. Use either precut stew meat or cut your own from beef chuck or round.

2 pounds cubed beef stew meat
Salt and black pepper
¼ cup canola oil
1 medium white onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
3 cups beef broth
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
½ teaspoon cracked black pepper
1 bay leaf
1 pound Yukon gold, or round red or white potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch chunks
2 large carrots, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
2 large celery ribs, cut into 1-inch pieces
½ cup frozen peas, thawed (optional)

1 Preheat oven to 300°F. Pat moisture from beef with paper towels; season with salt and ground pepper.

2 In a 5-quart cast-iron Dutch oven heat oil over medium-high heat. Brown beef in batches until browned on all sides. Transfer browned beef to a clean plate.

3 Reduce heat to medium; add onion. Cook 5 minutes or until nearly tender, stirring occasionally. Add the garlic; cook and stir 1 minute.

4 Reduce heat to medium-low. Stir in flour. Cook and stir 2 minutes. Add 1 cup broth; cook and scrape browned bits from bottom of Dutch oven. Pour in remaining broth. Stir in tomato paste, Worcestershire sauce, Italian seasoning, cracked black pepper and bay leaf. Return beef to Dutch oven.

5 Bring mixture to boil. Cover and transfer Dutch oven to preheated oven; cook 1 hour. Add potatoes, carrots and celery. Cover and cook in oven 30 minutes or until potatoes are tender.

6 Transfer Dutch oven to stovetop. Simmer, uncovered, 15 minutes or until slightly thickened. If desired, stir in peas. Remove and discard bay leaf. Season to taste with salt and ground pepper.

A classic stick-to-your-ribs beef stew

LEMON-SAGE ROASTED CHICKEN

PREP 30 minutes **ROAST** 1 hour 30 minutes **STAND** 45 minutes **SERVES** 4 to 6

Roasting a whole chicken is so easy and the results so flavorful when you use a cast-iron Dutch oven. The heavy metal walls hold the heat and evenly cook the chicken, giving it a delicious crispy, golden skin.

1 6-pound roasting chicken
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
Coarse kosher salt and black pepper
1 lemon, halved
3 large cloves garlic, peeled and smashed
4 sprigs fresh sage
2 small yellow onions, cut into ½-inch slices
1 cup chicken broth

1 Let chicken and 1 tablespoon butter stand at room temperature 30 minutes.

2 Preheat oven to 425°F. Remove giblets from chicken; reserve giblets for another use or discard. Rinse chicken body cavity; pat dry with paper towels. Sprinkle cavity with salt and pepper. Slightly squeeze juice from lemon halves into cavity. Place lemon halves, garlic and sage in cavity.

3 Tie drumsticks to tail of chicken using kitchen string. Twist wing tips under back. Spread softened butter over entire surface of chicken; sprinkle with salt and pepper.

4 In the bottom of a 6- to 8-quart cast-iron Dutch oven, place onion slices in two rows down the center. Place chicken, breast side up, on top of onions. Roast in oven 1½ hours or until thermometer inserted into thigh registers 165°F to 170°F. Transfer chicken to cutting board. Loosely cover with foil; let rest 15 minutes.

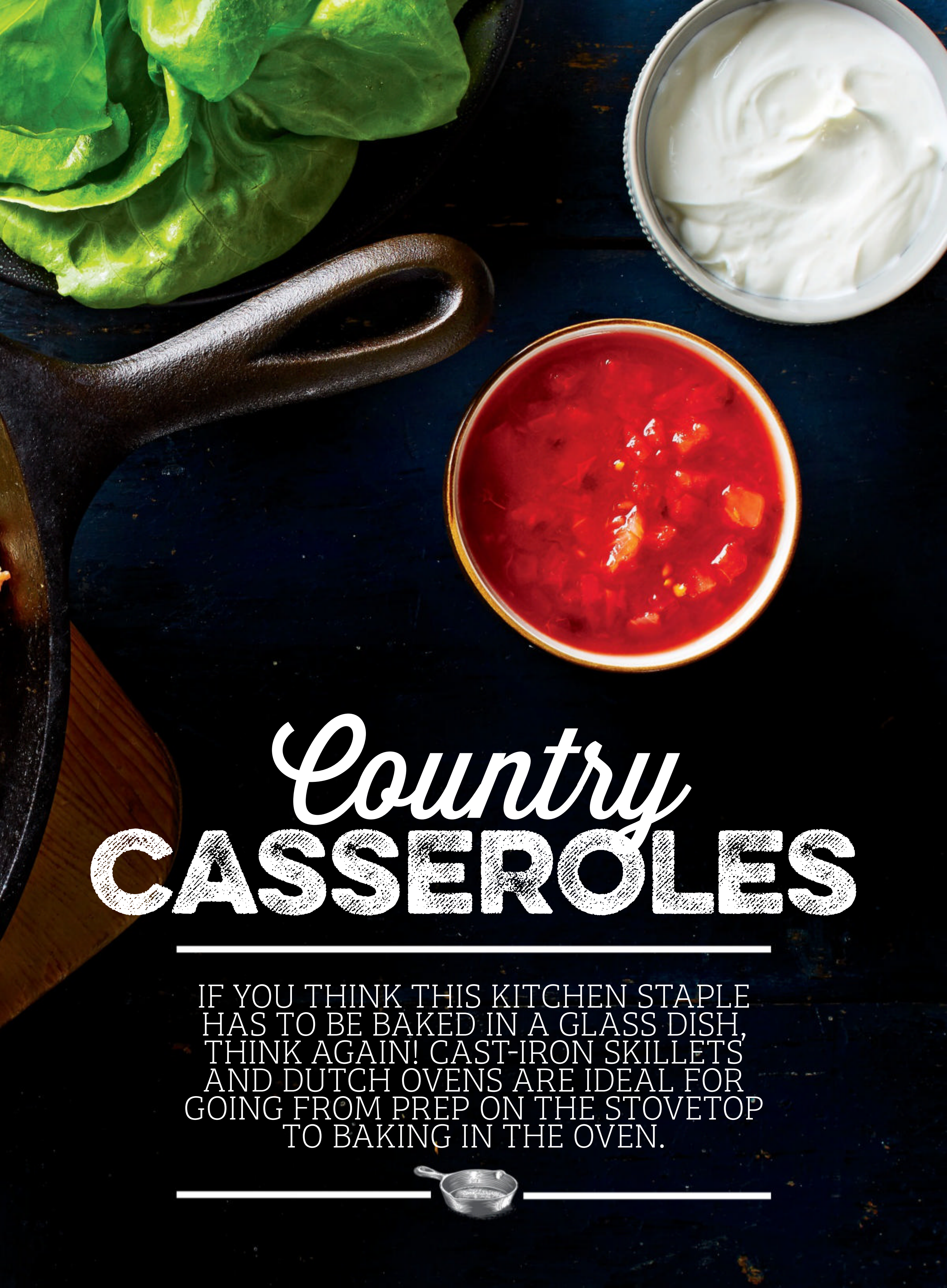
5 Meanwhile, pour drippings into a shallow bowl; reserve onions and brown bits in Dutch oven.

6 Skim and discard excess fat from drippings in bowl. Return pan drippings to Dutch oven; cook on stovetop over medium heat 1 minute, scraping brown bits from bottom of pan with wooden spoon or spatula. Add chicken broth; increase heat to high. Bring to a simmer; remove from heat.

7 Strain broth mixture into a small bowl, pressing on onions to extract any liquid. Discard onions. Stir remaining tablespoon of butter into broth mixture.

8 To serve, untie chicken legs. Discard lemon, garlic and sage from cavity. Carve; serve with broth mixture as sauce on the side.

Turkey and Bean Tamale Pie, *page 71*



Country
CASSEROLES

IF YOU THINK THIS KITCHEN STAPLE HAS TO BE BAKED IN A GLASS DISH, THINK AGAIN! CAST-IRON SKILLETS AND DUTCH OVENS ARE IDEAL FOR GOING FROM PREP ON THE STOVETOP TO BAKING IN THE OVEN.

CHICKEN AND BROCCOLI DIVAN

PREP 20 minutes **BAKE** 30 minutes **STAND** 5 minutes **SERVES** 4

The traditional version of this elegant chicken casserole was made with a mornay or hollandaise sauce. This modern version uses a combo of mayonnaise, sour cream and cream of mushroom soup as a tasty stand-in.

FILLING

1	10¾-ounce can condensed cream of mushroom soup
½	cup mayonnaise
½	cup sour cream
½	cup shredded mild cheddar cheese
¼	cup dry white wine
2	teaspoons fresh lemon juice
½	teaspoon curry powder
3	cups shredded cooked chicken (about 12 ounces)

TOPPING

1	10-ounce package frozen chopped broccoli, thawed and drained well
	Salt and black pepper
¼	cup grated Asiago cheese
¼	cup panko bread crumbs
1	tablespoon butter, cut up

1 Preheat oven to 350°F. In a medium bowl combine condensed soup, mayonnaise, sour cream, cheddar cheese, wine, lemon juice and curry powder. Add chicken and broccoli; toss until combined. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

2 Transfer chicken-broccoli mixture to a 10-inch cast-iron skillet. In a small bowl combine Asiago cheese and panko; sprinkle on top of chicken-broccoli mixture. Sprinkle with pieces of butter.

3 Bake, uncovered, 30 minutes or until bubbly. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

A tried-and-true classic

CLASSIC SHEPHERD'S PIE

PREP 30 minutes **COOK** 7 minutes **BAKE** 25 minutes **STAND** 5 minutes **SERVES** 6 to 8

On a crisp fall or wintry evening, this hearty dish will warm your body and soothe your soul. To streamline meal prep, this recipe uses prepared mashed potatoes for the topping. If you have leftover mashed potatoes, by all means use them.

FILLING

2	**tablespoons canola oil**
2	**carrots, peeled and diced**
2	**celery ribs, diced**
½	**cup chopped yellow onion**
2	**cloves garlic, minced**
2	**pounds lean ground beef or ground lamb**
3	**tablespoons all-purpose flour**
2	**cups frozen peas, thawed**
1	**cup beef broth**
2	**tablespoons tomato paste**
2	**teaspoons Worcestershire sauce**
2	**teaspoons Montreal Steak® seasoning**
1	**teaspoon salt**
½	**teaspoon black pepper**

TOPPING

1	**24-ounce package refrigerated garlic mashed potatoes**
2	**tablespoons unsalted butter, cut up**

1 Preheat oven to 400°F. For filling, in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet heat oil over medium heat. Add carrots, celery, onion and garlic. Cook 5 to 7 minutes or until carrots are tender, stirring occasionally. Using a slotted spoon, transfer vegetables to a bowl.

2 Add ground meat to skillet. Cook until browned; drain and discard drippings. Sprinkle flour over meat and stir until well combined. Cook over medium heat 2 to 3 minutes or until flour begins to lightly brown. Remove from heat.

3 Add vegetable mixture, frozen peas, broth, tomato paste, Worcestershire sauce, Montreal Steak® seasoning, salt and black pepper to meat mixture; stir until well combined.

4 Spoon potatoes on top in small spoonfuls; carefully spread to cover filling. Sprinkle with pieces of butter. Bake 25 minutes or just until potatoes begin to turn brown. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

ALFREDO SPINACH AND MUSHROOM LASAGNA

PREP 30 minutes **COOK** 12 minutes **BAKE** 30 minutes **STAND** 5 minutes **SERVES** 8

Layers of spinach, bell peppers, mushrooms and tomatoes with creamy white Alfredo sauce make for a pretty and flavorful no-meat lasagna.

1 egg, slightly beaten
16 ounces whole milk ricotta
8 ounces shredded mozzarella cheese (2 cups)
½ cup grated Romano cheese
1½ teaspoons dried basil
½ teaspoon coarse kosher salt
½ teaspoon black pepper
3 tablespoons olive oil
12 ounces assorted mushrooms (such as shiitake, cremini, button)
1 medium yellow onion, chopped
1 small green or yellow bell pepper, chopped
5 ounces baby spinach or kale
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 14-ounce can diced fire-roasted tomatoes , undrained
12 no-boil lasagna noodles
1 10-ounce container refrigerated light Alfredo sauce (1¼ cups)

1 Preheat oven to 400°F. In a medium bowl combine egg, ricotta, 1 cup mozzarella, ¼ cup Romano, basil, salt and pepper; set aside.

2 In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms; cook 5 to 7 minutes or until lightly browned, stirring occasionally. Transfer mushrooms to a bowl.

3 Add 1 tablespoon oil to skillet. Add onion and bell pepper; cook and stir 5 minutes or until tender. Add spinach and garlic; cook and stir 2 to 4 minutes or until spinach is wilted. Transfer spinach mixture to bowl with mushrooms. Stir in undrained tomatoes.

4 Carefully wipe out skillet with paper towels. Add remaining 1 tablespoon oil. Arrange 4 noodles in bottom of skillet, breaking as needed to form a single layer. Top with one-third each of vegetable mixture, ricotta mixture and Alfredo sauce. Repeat two more times, layering noodles in opposite direction each time. Top with remaining 1 cup mozzarella cheese and ¼ cup Romano cheese.

5 Bake, uncovered, 30 minutes or until golden and noodles are tender. Let stand 5 minutes. Cut into wedges to serve.

Layers and layers of delish

TURKEY AND BEAN TAMALE PIE

PREP 10 minutes **COOK** 12 minutes **BAKE** 30 minutes **SERVES** 8

This fuss-free weeknight dish tastes like traditional tamales without the work. The corn muffin layer smothered with a saucy enchilada bean-and-turkey topping gives each bite savory Southwest flavor.

	Nonstick cooking spray
1	**egg, slightly beaten**
⅓	**cup milk**
1	**1-ounce package taco seasoning**
1	**15.25-ounce can whole kernel corn, drained**
1	**4.5-ounce can diced green chiles, drained**
1¾	**cups shredded Pepper Jack cheese**
1	**8.5-ounce package corn muffin mix**
1	**pound ground turkey or lean ground beef**
1	**16-ounce can dark red kidney beans, drained and rinsed**
1	**10-ounce can red enchilada sauce**
	Toppings: sour cream, chopped avocado, chopped tomato and/or shredded lettuce

1 Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly spray a 10-inch cast-iron skillet with nonstick spray; set aside.

2 In a large bowl combine egg, milk and taco seasoning. Stir in corn, chiles and ¾ cup cheese. Add corn muffin mix; stir just until combined. Spread in bottom of prepared skillet; bake 15 minutes or until center is set.

3 Meanwhile, in another skillet cook turkey over medium-high heat until cooked through. Stir in beans; cook over medium heat 2 minutes. Stir in enchilada sauce; remove from heat.

4 Using a fork, generously poke holes over entire surface of cornbread in skillet. Spoon turkey mixture evenly on top. Sprinkle with remaining 1 cup cheese. Bake, uncovered, 15 minutes or until cheese is melted. Serve immediately with toppings.

SKILLET CHICKEN POT PIE

PREP 30 minutes **COOK** 8 minutes **BAKE** 40 minutes **STAND** 10 minutes **SERVES** 8

On a cool, crisp day, here's a homey meal that'll warm the hearts of your family. Baking it in the skillet keeps it piping hot while it sits on the table during dinner.

	Vegetable or canola oil
1	**14.1-ounce package refrigerated pie crusts (2 crusts), softened as directed on package**
5	**tablespoons butter**
½	**cup chopped yellow onion**
1	**rib celery, chopped**
⅓	**cup all-purpose flour**
2	**cups reduced-sodium chicken broth**
¼	**cup half-and-half or light cream**
1½	**teaspoons garlic salt**
1½	**teaspoons poultry seasoning**
1	**teaspoon dried thyme**
¼	**teaspoon lemon- pepper seasoning**
¼	**teaspoon black pepper**
3	**cups chopped cooked chicken**
2	**cups frozen mixed vegetables, thawed**
1	**egg, beaten with 1 teaspoon cold water**

1 Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly brush bottom and sides of a 10-inch cast-iron skillet with oil. Line inside skillet with 1 pie crust pastry, slightly pressing to fit pastry in edges of skillet. Lightly cover with plastic wrap to prevent pastry from drying out. Set aside.

2 In another large skillet melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onion and celery; cook and stir 3 minutes or until celery begins to soften. Reduce heat to medium.

3 Using a wire whisk, stir in flour. Cook and stir until butter is absorbed. Slowly whisk in broth. Increase heat to medium-high and bring mixture to a simmer, stirring often. Stir in half-and-half, garlic salt, poultry seasoning, thyme, lemon-pepper and black pepper. Gently simmer 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

4 Remove mixture from heat. Stir in chicken and vegetables; set aside. Pour mixture into crust.

5 Unroll remaining pie crust pastry. Using a sharp knife, cut slits in pastry. Place pastry on filling; trim and crimp edge. Lightly brush with beaten egg mixture.

6 Bake for 40 to 45 minutes until the crust is golden. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

CREAMY TUNA NOODLE CASSEROLE

PREP 40 minutes **COOK** 9 minutes **BAKE** 25 minutes **STAND** 5 minutes **SERVES** 6

The made-from-scratch mushroom sauce and buttery cracker topping turn this traditional comfort-food into a company-special dish.

8	**ounces dried medium egg noodles**
1	**tablespoon olive oil**
1	**medium white onion, finely chopped**
8	**ounces mushrooms, sliced**
½	**teaspoon salt**
½	**cup dry white wine**
6	**tablespoons all-purpose flour**
½	**teaspoon black pepper**
3	**cups milk**
10-12	**ounces canned water-packed solid white Albacore tuna, drained and broken into chunks**
1	**cup frozen peas, thawed**
1	**cup grated Parmesan cheese**
⅔	**cup coarsely crushed buttery round crackers or slightly broken bite-size buttery round crackers**

1 Cook noodles according to package directions until nearly tender. Drain; rinse with cold water and set aside.

2 Meanwhile, preheat oven to 350°F. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onion, mushrooms and salt; cook 5 minutes or until onion is tender, stirring occasionally.

3 Remove skillet from heat; add wine to mushroom mixture. Return skillet to heat; cook 4 to 5 minutes or until wine has evaporated.

4 Sprinkle flour and pepper over mushroom mixture; stir to combine. Slowly stir in milk. Bring to simmer, stirring constantly. Remove from heat.

5 Add tuna, peas and ½ cup Parmesan cheese; gently stir until combined. Stir in noodles; toss until combined. Sprinkle crushed crackers and remaining ½ cup Parmesan on top. Bake 25 minutes or until heated through and lightly browned. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

THREE-CHEESE BAKED ZITI

PREP 40 minutes **COOK** 28 minutes **BAKE** 30 minutes **STAND** 5 minutes **SERVES** 6 to 8

This crowd-pleasing casserole will win rave reviews at potluck parties. Ziti pasta is baked in a bubbling homemade tomato sauce with layers of creamy ricotta and fresh mozzarella. Best yet, it will stay warm in the hot cast-iron Dutch oven when you transport it.

1/4	**cup olive oil**
1	**large white onion, finely chopped**
4	**cloves garlic, minced**
	Salt and black pepper
2	**tablespoons tomato paste**
1	**28-ounce can crushed tomatoes, undrained**
1	**28-ounce can tomato sauce**
1	**teaspoon Italian seasoning**
3/4	**teaspoon crushed red pepper (optional)**
1	**pound ziti or penne**
16	**ounces ricotta**
1/2	**cup heavy whipping cream**
1/2	**cup grated Parmesan or Pecorino cheese plus more for topping**
1	**pound fresh mozzarella, cut into 1/2-inch pieces**

1 For sauce, in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet heat oil over medium heat. Add onion and garlic; lightly season with salt and pepper. Cook 6 minutes or until onion is tender, stirring occasionally. Stir in tomato paste. Cook 2 minutes, stirring occasionally.

2 Add undrained crushed tomatoes, tomato sauce, Italian seasoning and, if desired, red pepper. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Bring to a simmer. Gently simmer 20 to 30 minutes or until slightly thickened, stirring occasionally.

3 Meanwhile, preheat oven to 425°F. Cook pasta according to package directions until nearly tender. Drain; rinse with cold water.

4 For filling, in a medium bowl combine ricotta, cream and ½ cup Parmesan cheese. Season to taste with salt and pepper; set aside.

5 To assemble casserole, in a large bowl combine pasta and 2 cups sauce. Spread a small amount of sauce in the bottom of a 3-quart cast-iron Dutch oven. Top with one-third pasta mixture and one-third sauce. Dollop half the ricotta mixture on top; sprinkle with one-third of the mozzarella. Repeat layers, ending with pasta, sauce, and mozzarella. Sprinkle with a small amount of additional Parmesan cheese.

6 Bake, uncovered, 30 to 40 minutes or until heated through and edges are bubbly and golden. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

AU GRATIN POTATOES-AND-HAM CASSEROLES

PREP 35 minutes **COOK** 2 minutes **BAKE** 1 hour 10 minutes **SERVES** 4

Individual serving-size cast-iron pans add a delightful dimension to this homey recipe. Serve each dish or skillet on a heat-resistant dinner plate to protect your tabletop. Tuck a tossed salad alongside to complete the meal.

3	**tablespoons unsalted butter**
½	**cup finely chopped yellow onion**
2	**tablespoons all-purpose flour**
¼	**teaspoon salt**
⅛	**teaspoon white pepper**
1½	**cups whole milk**
1½	**cups shredded mild cheddar or Swiss cheese**
	Nonstick cooking spray
1	**pound round red potatoes, very thinly sliced**
1¼	**cups chopped smoked ham**

1 Preheat oven to 350°F. For sauce, in a small saucepan melt 2 tablespoons butter over medium-high heat. Add onion; cook 5 minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally. Add flour; cook and stir 1 minute. Stir in salt and white pepper.

2 Slowly stir in milk. Bring mixture to a gentle boil; cook and stir 1 to 2 minutes or until slightly thickened. Remove saucepan from heat; stir in 1 cup cheese until melted. Set sauce aside.

3 Lightly spray four 6-ounce cast-iron au gratin dishes or 6½-inch cast-iron skillets with nonstick spray. Spread about 1 tablespoon sauce in bottom of each dish. Layer using one-third of the potatoes, one-half of ham and one-third of sauce. Repeat layers, ending with potatoes and sauce.

4 Sprinkle remaining cheese on top of casseroles. Cut the remaining 1 tablespoon butter into small pieces; sprinkle on cheese layer. Place the au gratin dishes on a baking sheet.

5 Lightly spray one side of a large sheet of foil with nonstick spray; loosely cover casseroles on baking sheet with foil. Bake 45 minutes. Remove foil; bake 25 minutes or until tops are golden brown.

Choose your cheese—cheddar or Swiss

No-Knead Whole Wheat Bread,
page 96

Biscuits & BREADS

CAST-IRON COOKWARE IS IDEAL FOR BREAD BAKING. THE HOT SURFACE CREATES A CRISP CRUST WHILE THE RADIANT HEAT HELPS BAKE THE INTERIOR TO THE PERFECT TEXTURE.

CRANBERRY-ORANGE SKILLET MUFFIN

PRE-PREP 10 minutes **PREP** 20 minutes **BAKE** 30 minutes **COOL** 5 minutes **SERVES** 8 to 10

Yes, you'll have to share this muffin. It has all the elements you love in the small versions—buttery crumb, plump berries and a hint of citrus.

	Shortening
2⅔	**cups all-purpose flour**
½	**cup granulated sugar**
1	**tablespoon baking powder**
1	**tablespoon finely shredded orange peel**
1½	**teaspoons salt**
2	**eggs, slightly beaten**
1	**cup plus 2 tablespoons buttermilk**
2	**tablespoons fresh orange juice**
2	**teaspoons vanilla extract**
¾	**cup unsalted butter, melted**
1¼	**cups dried cranberries**

1 Preheat oven to 400°F. Lightly brush inside of a 12-inch cast-iron skillet with shortening. Place skillet in oven 10 minutes.

2 In a large bowl whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder, orange peel and salt.

3 In a medium bowl whisk together eggs, 1 cup buttermilk, orange juice and vanilla. Add buttermilk mixture to flour mixture; add melted butter. Using a wooden spoon, stir just until moistened. Fold in cranberries. If necessary, gently stir in remaining 2 tablespoons buttermilk if batter is too thick.

4 Spoon and spread batter evenly into hot skillet. Bake 30 to 40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near center comes out clean. Cool muffin in skillet on wire rack 5 to 10 minutes. Cut into wedges or slices to serve. Serve warm.

ORANGE SCONES

PREP 25 minutes **BAKE** 14 minutes **MAKES** 8

For picture-perfect wedge-shape scones, use a cast-iron wedge pan. If you don't have a wedge pan, bake the wedges on a cast-iron griddle or in a round baking pan.

SCONES

Nonstick cooking spray
2 cups all-purpose flour
¼ cup granulated sugar
2 teaspoons baking powder
1½ teaspoons coarse kosher salt
1½ teaspoons finely shredded orange peel
½ teaspoon baking soda
6 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cubed
1 egg
1 cup half-and-half

DRIZZLE

1 cup powdered sugar
2 tablespoons half-and-half
½ teaspoon finely shredded orange peel
1 teaspoon fresh orange juice

1 Preheat oven to 425°F. Lightly spray molds of a cast-iron wedge pan with nonstick spray; set aside.

2 For scones, in a large bowl whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder, salt, orange peel and baking soda. Using a pastry blender, cut butter into flour mixture until mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

3 In a small bowl whisk together egg and half-and-half until well combined. Add egg mixture to flour mixture. Using a fork, stir just until moistened. (Dough will be wet.)

4 Turn dough out onto a generously floured surface. Knead by folding dough in half five or six times or until dough holds together. Pat or lightly roll dough into a 1½-inch-thick circle.

5 Cut dough into 8 wedges. Place dough wedges into molds of prepared pan. Bake 14 minutes or until golden brown. Remove scones from pan and transfer to a wire cooling rack.

6 Meanwhile, for drizzle, in a small bowl stir together powdered sugar, half-and-half, orange peel and juice. Drizzle over warm scones. Serve immediately.

CINNAMON MONKEY BREAD

PREP 20 minutes **BAKE** 30 minutes **COOL** 10 minutes **MAKES** 12

Cinnamon-sugar, toasted pecans and a buttery-brown sugar sauce transform refrigerated biscuits into a sweet pull-apart breakfast bread.

	Nonstick cooking spray
½	**cup granulated sugar**
1	**teaspoon ground cinnamon**
2	**16.3-ounce packages refrigerated flaky layers original biscuits (16 biscuits total)**
½	**cup chopped toasted pecans**
½	**cup raisins or dried cranberries (optional)**
1	**cup packed dark brown sugar**
¾	**cup unsalted butter, melted**

1 Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a 10-cup cast-iron fluted cake pan with nonstick spray; set aside. In a large resealable plastic bag combine the granulated sugar and cinnamon.

2 Separate dough into 16 biscuits; cut each biscuit into quarters. Add a few biscuit pieces to bag with cinnamon and sugar mixture; shake until well coated. Repeat coating remaining biscuit pieces. Arrange biscuit pieces in prepared pan with pecans and, if desired, raisins and/or dried cranberries.

3 In a small bowl combine brown sugar and butter; pour butter mixture over biscuit pieces.

4 Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until golden brown and no longer doughy in center. Cool in pan on wire rack 10 minutes. Invert bread onto a serving plate. Serve warm.

STICKY CINNAMON ROLLS WITH CREAM CHEESE ICING

PREP 25 minutes **BAKE** 20 minutes **STAND** 35 minutes **COOL** 10 minutes **MAKES** 12

These treats start with a hot-roll mix, so you can roll out of bed and have them ready for an early breakfast.

ROLLS

	Nonstick cooking spray
1	**16-ounce package hot roll mix**
½	**cup unsalted butter, softened**
1	**cup packed dark brown sugar**
2	**teaspoons ground cinnamon**

ICING

4	**ounces cream cheese, softened**
¼	**cup unsalted butter, softened**
½	**teaspoon vanilla extract**
1½	**cups powdered sugar**
1	**to 2 teaspoons milk**

1 For rolls, lightly spray a 12-inch cast-iron skillet with nonstick spray; set aside. Prepare the hot roll mix according to package directions. Let stand 5 minutes.

2 On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough into an 18×12-inch rectangle. Spread with butter to within 1 inch of one long side. Combine brown sugar and cinnamon; sprinkle over butter.

3 Starting at the buttered long side, roll dough up tightly, jelly-roll style. Cut into 12 equal pieces. Arrange pieces, cut sides down, in the prepared skillet. Loosely cover with plastic wrap, then a kitchen towel. Let rise in a warm place until doubled in size (about 30 minutes).

4 Preheat oven to 375°F. Bake 20 to 25 minutes until tops are golden brown. Cool in skillet on a wire rack 10 minutes.

5 Meanwhile for icing, in a medium bowl using an electric mixer, beat cream cheese, butter and vanilla 1 minute or until creamy. Beat in powdered sugar and enough milk to make of drizzling consistency.

HERBED DINNER ROLLS

PREP 40 minutes **BAKE** 25 minutes **STAND** 2 hours 35 minutes **MAKES** 12

These warm-from-the-oven buns, packed with fresh herbs and a sprinkling of salt on the tops, are the perfect mate to soup, stew or any meal.

- **1 cup whole milk, warmed to 110°F**
- **1 ¼-ounce packet active dry yeast (2¼ teaspoons)**
- **2 tablespoons plus ½ teaspoon granulated sugar**
- **¼ cup unsalted butter, melted and slightly cooled**
- **1 egg**
- **2 teaspoons dried rosemary**
- **2 teaspoons dried Italian seasoning**
- **2 teaspoons dried thyme**
- **1 teaspoon garlic powder**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **3 cups bread flour, plus more if necessary**
- **Nonstick cooking spray**
- **Sea salt**

1 In a large mixing bowl combine warm milk, yeast and ½ teaspoon sugar; stir just until combined. Let stand 5 minutes or until bubbly.

2 Add the remaining 2 tablespoons sugar, 2 tablespoons melted butter, egg, rosemary, Italian seasoning, thyme, garlic powder, salt and 2 cups flour to yeast mixture. Using an electric mixer fitted with dough hook, beat on low speed 1 minute. Add remaining 1 cup flour; beat on low speed 1 minute. Continue beating until dough is slightly sticky and begins to pull away from the sides of the bowl.

3 Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Knead 2 minutes. If necessary, knead in additional flour, 1 tablespoon at a time, until it forms a moderately soft dough.

4 Shape dough into a ball. Place in a lightly greased bowl, turning to grease surface of dough. Loosely cover with plastic wrap; let rise in warm place until double in size (about 2 hours).

5 Lightly spray a 12-inch cast-iron skillet with nonstick spray; set aside. Punch dough down. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Using a sharp knife, cut the dough in half. Cut each half into 6 equal pieces for a total of 12 pieces. Shape pieces into balls by gently pulling edges and tucking edges under until tops are smooth and round. Arrange in the prepared skillet.

6 Brush rolls with remaining 2 tablespoons melted butter; sprinkle with sea salt. Loosely cover with plastic wrap; let rise in a warm place until double in size (30 to 45 minutes).

7 Preheat oven to 350°F. Bake rolls 25 minutes or until golden. Remove rolls from skillet; serve warm.

LODGE

PARMESAN-HERB FOCACCIA

PREP 25 minutes **STAND** 35 minutes **BAKE** 20 minutes **SERVES** 6 to 8

Hankering for homemade bread but short on time? Make this no-knead skillet focaccia. It comes together quickly and the Parmesan-herb butter gives it a wonderful Italian flavor.

FOCACCIA

2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon olive oil
¾ cup warm water (110°F to 115°F)
½ teaspoon granulated sugar
1½ teaspoons instant yeast
1¾ cups all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon salt

PARMESAN-HERB BUTTER

3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
1 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese
¼ teaspoon garlic powder
¼ teaspoon dried basil
¼ teaspoon dried oregano leaves

1 For focaccia, brush a 10-inch cast-iron skillet with 1 teaspoon olive oil.

2 In a large bowl combine warm water and sugar. Stir until sugar dissolves. Stir in yeast; let stand 5 minutes or until bubbly.

3 Add 1 cup flour and salt to yeast mixture. Using a wooden spoon, stir until well combined. Stir in remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil. Gradually stir in ¾ cup flour. Continue mixing with wooden spoon until dough pulls away from the sides of the bowl.

4 Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface; shape into a ball. Transfer dough to prepared skillet. Using your fingers, lightly press dough evenly in skillet. Cover with a towel; let rise in a warm place 30 minutes or until puffy.

5 Preheat oven to 400°F. Using your fingers, make several indentations into top of dough.

6 For butter mixture, in a small bowl combine melted butter, Parmesan, garlic powder, basil and oregano. Brush top of dough with half the butter mixture. Bake 20 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven; brush with remaining butter. Cool slightly in skillet; slice to serve. Serve warm.

Country Sausage Gravy

Heat a 10-inch cast-iron skillet over medium heat. Add 8 ounces *bulk pork sausage;* cook until browned. Use a slotted spoon to transfer sausage to a bowl. Add 2 tablespoons *butter* to drippings in skillet; melt. Stir in ¼ cup *all-purpose flour;* cook and stir 2 to 3 minutes or until mixture turns light golden brown. Whisk in 2 cups *whole milk;* cook and stir until thickened and bubbly. Return sausage to gravy. Season to taste with *salt* and *black pepper.* Cook until heated through. Makes 3 cups.

SOUTHERN BUTTERMILK BISCUITS

PRE-PREP 5 minutes **PREP** 20 minutes **BAKE** 15 minutes **MAKES** 12

These delightful buns are wonderfully flaky with golden-brown crusty tops and bottoms. Serve them on their own, with butter and jam or topped with creamy sausage gravy for a traditional Southern breakfast.

¼	**cup cold unsalted butter (4 tablespoons)**
2	**cups all-purpose flour**
2½	**teaspoons baking powder**
½	**teaspoon cream of tartar**
½	**teaspoon salt**
1	**egg**
⅔	**cup buttermilk**

1 Preheat oven to 425°F. Place 1 tablespoon butter in a 10-inch cast- iron skillet. Place skillet in oven 5 to 10 minutes.

2 Meanwhile, in a large bowl whisk together flour, baking powder, cream of tartar and salt. Using your fingers, rub in remaining 3 tablespoons butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

3 In a small bowl whisk together egg and buttermilk. Add egg mixture to flour mixture. Using a fork, stir just until moistened.

4 Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Pat dough to ½ to ¾ inch thickness. Using a round biscuit cutter, cut dough into 12 biscuits.

5 Carefully remove skillet from oven; arrange biscuits side by side with edges touching in skillet. Bake 15 to 20 minute or until lightly golden. Remove biscuits from skillet; serve warm.

BUTTERMILK CORNBREAD STICKS

PRE-PREP 10 minutes **PREP** 15 minutes **BAKE** 10 minutes **MAKES** 14

The secret to authentic Southern cornbread is to use a super-hot cast-iron pan and to add the batter to the hot fat in the pan. The result? Bread with a crisp exterior and moist, tender interior.

¼	**cup canola oil**
2	**cups stone-ground yellow cornmeal**
½	**cup all-purpose flour**
1	**tablespoon granulated sugar**
2	**teaspoons baking soda**
1½	**teaspoons salt**
2	**eggs, slightly beaten**
2½	**cups buttermilk**
¼	**cup unsalted butter, melted**

1 Preheat oven to 425°F. Lightly brush 14 molds of two or three cast-iron cornstick pans* with oil. Place pans in oven 10 minutes.

2 In a large bowl whisk together cornmeal, flour, sugar, baking soda and salt. Add eggs, buttermilk and melted butter; stir with wooden spoon just until moistened.

3 Carefully remove pans from oven. Evenly divide batter among the hot cornstick molds, filling molds ⅛ inch from the tops.

4 Bake 10 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near centers comes out clean. Remove bread sticks from pans; slightly cool on wire racks. Serve warm.

***** For skillet cornbread, brush a 10-inch cast-iron skillet with 2 tablespoons canola oil; heat skillet in oven. Prepare batter as directed; spread in heated skillet. Bake 15 to 20 minutes or until toothpick inserted near centers come out clean.

HOMEMADE ITALIAN BREAD

PREP 30 minutes **BAKE** 30 minutes **STAND** 1 hour **MAKES** 1 loaf (24 slices)

The hot cast-iron baking pan creates a crispy crust with a deliciously chewy interior—just like a loaf from a bakery.

3	**to 3½ cups bread flour**
1	**¼-ounce packet active dry yeast (2¼ teaspoons)**
2	**teaspoons granulated sugar**
½	**teaspoon salt**
1	**cup warm water (120°F to 130°F)**
2	**tablespoons olive oil**
	Nonstick cooking spray
1	**tablespoon yellow cornmeal**
1	**egg white, slightly beaten**
1	**tablespoon water**

1 In a large mixing bowl combine 1½ cups flour, yeast, sugar and salt. Add 1 cup warm water and oil. Using an electric mixer, beat on low speed 30 seconds. Beat on high speed 3 minutes.

2 Using a wooden spoon, stir in as much of the remaining flour as you can. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Knead in enough remaining flour to make a stiff dough that is smooth and elastic (8 to 10 minutes).

3 Lightly spray bowl with nonstick spray. Shape dough into a ball. Place in the bowl, turning to grease surface of dough. Loosely cover with plastic wrap; let rise in a warm place until double in size (30 to 40 minutes).

4 Sprinkle a 14-inch round cast-iron baking or pizza pan with cornmeal. Punch down dough. Shape dough into an oval-shape loaf, about 12 inches long. Place on prepared baking pan. Lightly spray plastic wrap with nonstick spray; loosely cover loaf with greased plastic wrap. Let rise in warm place until doubled in size (30 to 45 minutes).

5 Preheat oven to 375°F. Using a sharp knife, make a 1-inch-deep lengthwise slash in loaf top. Combine egg white and 1 tablespoon water; lightly brush on loaf.

6 Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until loaf sounds hollow when lightly tapped. Remove loaf from baking pan; cool on wire rack.

NO-KNEAD WHOLE WHEAT BREAD

PREP 20 minutes **BAKE** 35 minutes **STAND** 1 hour 30 minutes **MAKES** 1 loaf

Whether you're a baker or not, this Dutch oven loaf is nearly failproof. Use a thermometer to make sure the water isn't too cool or too warm for the yeast to produce a high-rise loaf.

4 cups whole wheat flour
1 1/4-ounce packet active dry yeast (2 1/4 teaspoons)
1 1/2 teaspoons coarse kosher salt
2 cups warm water (120°F to 130°F)
Olive oil
1 tablespoon old-fashioned or quick-cooking rolled oats
Coarse sea salt

1 In a large bowl whisk together the flour, yeast and kosher salt. Add warm water. Using a wooden spoon, stir until combined (dough will be sticky). Lightly cover with plastic wrap, then a kitchen towel. Let rest at room temperature 1 hour.

2 Lightly grease the inside bottom of a 5-quart cast-iron Dutch oven with olive oil. Lightly dust top of dough in bowl with additional flour. Using floured hands, gently loosen dough from bowl and turn it into prepared Dutch oven. If necessary, use a wooden spoon to round the top. Cover with a towel; let rise in warm place until doubled in size (about 30 minutes).

3 Preheat oven to 400°F. Brush top of dough with about 2 teaspoons olive oil; sprinkle with rolled oats and sea salt. Bake 35 to 40 minutes until crusty and deep golden brown. Immediately remove bread from Dutch oven; cool on wire rack.

HERBED POPOVERS

PREP 10 minutes **BAKE** 30 minutes **MAKES** 12

These airy popovers with crisp, golden domes are delicious for brunch or alongside soups and stews. Or substitute 1 teaspoon vanilla extract for the herbs and serve with jams or honey for a midday tea break.

- **5 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted**
- **2 eggs**
- **1 cup milk**
- **1 teaspoon granulated sugar**
- **1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh thyme, rosemary, dill weed or chives (or ½ teaspoon dried)**
- **½ teaspoon salt**
- **1 cup all-purpose flour**

1 Preheat oven to 425°F. Reserve 1 teaspoon melted butter. Drizzle about 1 teaspoon remaining melted butter into each of 12 cast-iron muffin cups. Place muffin pans in oven while preparing batter.

2 For batter, in a medium bowl whisk together the reserved 1 tablespoon butter, eggs, milk, sugar, desired herb and salt. Beat in flour, a small amount at a time, until smooth.

3 Carefully remove muffin pans from oven. Fill prepared cups half full with batter.

4 Bake 20 minutes. Do not open oven; reduce oven temperature 350°F; bake 10 to 15 minutes or until puffed and golden. Remove popovers from cups and serve immediately.

Rustic Fruit Galette, *page 107*

Comfort DESSERTS

END THE MEAL ON A SWEET NOTE WITH A SPECIAL TREAT. COBBLERS, CAKES, COOKIES, PIES (EVEN CHILLED CONFECTIONS!) BENEFIT FROM BEING MADE IN CAST IRON.

BLUEBERRY COBBLER

PREP 15 minutes **BAKE** 30 minutes **SERVES** 6 to 8

As the dessert cooks, the biscuit batter rises and covers the berry filling with a sweet, cakelike topping. Serve warm with scoops of ice cream.

- **½ cup unsalted butter**
- **1 cup all-purpose flour**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **1½ teaspoons baking powder**
- **½ teaspoon salt**
- **1 cup milk**
- **1 tablespoon finely shredded lemon peel**
- **2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries, thawed if frozen**
- **1 tablespoon sugar**
- **Vanilla bean ice cream**

1 Preheat oven to 350°F. Place butter in a 10-inch cast-iron skillet; place skillet in oven just until butter is melted. Remove skillet from oven.

2 Meanwhile, in a medium bowl combine flour, 1 cup sugar, baking powder and salt. Make a well in center of flour mixture; pour in milk, lemon peel and juice, vanilla and melted butter from skillet. Stir with fork just until combined.

3 Pour batter into skillet. Toss blueberries with 1 tablespoon sugar; sprinkle on top of batter. Bake 30 minutes or until batter rises up and around the blueberries and is baked through.

4 Slightly cool in skillet on wire rack. Serve with ice cream.

So berry delicious!

CARAMEL-PECAN EBELSKIVERS

PREP 25 minutes **BAKE** 2 minutes per batch **MAKES** 24

These puffy round Scandinavian dessert pancakes are filled and topped with gooey caramel, then sprinkled with flaked salt. For an entertaining-friendly sweet treat, make the pancakes in advance and freeze, then reheat them in the oven before serving.

1	**cup pecan pieces, toasted**
1½	**cups all-purpose flour, sifted**
1	**tablespoon light brown sugar**
1	**teaspoon baking powder**
¼	**teaspoon salt**
3	**eggs, room temperature**
1½	**cups whole milk**
3	**tablespoons plus 2 tablespoons butter, melted**
1	**cup good-quality caramel ice cream sauce**
	Flake salt

1 Preheat oven to 200°F. Place a heatproof platter in the oven.

2 In a blender or mini food processor blend or process pecans to coarse crumbs. In a large bowl whisk together pecans, flour, brown sugar, baking powder and ¼ teaspoon salt; set aside.

3 Separate egg whites from the yolks, placing whites in a medium bowl and yolks in another medium bowl. Set egg whites aside.

4 Add milk and 3 tablespoons melted butter to egg yolks; whisk until well combined. Add the milk mixture to flour mixture. Using a wooden spoon, stir just until moistened (batter should be lumpy).

5 Using an electric mixer, beat the egg whites until stiff peaks form (tips stand straight). Using a straight silicone or rubber spatula, fold about one-third of the whites into the batter to lighten it. Then fold in remaining egg whites just until no streaks of white remain.

6 Heat an ebelskiver pan on stovetop over medium heat. Brush each well with a small amount of the remaining 2 tablespoons butter; there should be a tiny pool of butter at the bottom of each well.

7 When the butter starts bubbling, spoon 1 tablespoon batter into each well. Quickly spoon 1 teaspoon caramel sauce in center of each pancake, then top each with 1 tablespoon batter. Cook 1 to 2 minutes or until bottoms are golden. Using a small silicone spatula, turn pancakes. Continue cooking 1 to 2 minutes or until golden. Transfer pancakes to platter in oven to keep warm. Repeat making pancakes with remaining butter, batter and caramel.

8 To serve, if necessary, warm remaining caramel sauce just until pourable. Arrange pancakes on a platter or stack 3 or 4 pancakes on each dessert plate; drizzle with remaining caramel sauce and sprinkle with flake salt.

OLD-FASHIONED POUND CAKE

PRE-PREP 30 minutes **PREP** 20 minutes **BAKE** 1 hour **COOL** 10 minutes **SERVES** 10

Enjoy this rich, buttery, moist and elegant cake on its own with a sprinkle of powdered sugar or with a thin sugar-lemon glaze. Or dress up slices with sweetened fresh berries and a dollop of whipped cream.

1	**cup plus 1 tablespoon butter**
5	**eggs**
3	**cups plus 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
½	**teaspoon baking powder**
½	**teaspoon salt**
½	**cup butter-flavor shortening**
3	**cups granulated sugar**
1	**teaspoon vanilla extract**
1	**cup milk**
	Powdered sugar

1 Allow butter and eggs to stand at room temperature 30 minutes.

2 Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and lightly flour a 10-cup cast-iron fluted cake pan using 1 tablespoon butter and about 2 tablespoons flour; set aside. In a medium bowl whisk together 3 cups flour, baking powder and salt.

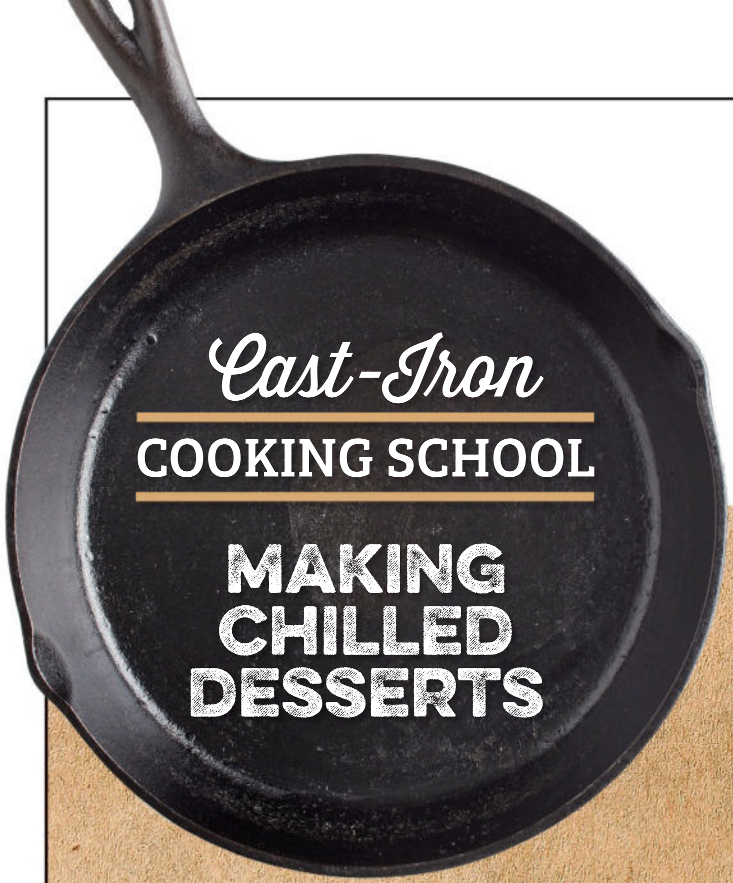
3 In a large bowl, using an electric mixer, beat 1 cup butter and shortening on medium speed 30 seconds. Gradually beat in granulated sugar and vanilla; beat 2 minutes more.

4 Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Alternately add flour mixture and milk to the butter mixture, beating on low speed after each addition.

5 Pour and evenly spread batter in prepared pan. Bake 1 to 1½ hours or until a toothpick inserted near center comes out clean.

6 Cool cake in pan 10 minutes. Loosen side of cake from pan. Invert and remove cake from pan; cool completely on wire rack. Just before serving, lightly sprinkle with powdered sugar.

RED-VELVET SWIRLED POUND CAKE Prepare cake pan and batter as directed. In a medium bowl stir together 2 cups of the batter, ¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder, 3 tablespoons milk and 5 teaspoons red food coloring. Pour and evenly spread half the white batter into the prepared pan. Dollop with half the chocolate batter on top. Repeat pouring and dolloping remaining white and chocolate batters. Using a thin spatula or butter knife, gently swirl the two batters. Bake and cool cake as directed. Lightly sprinkle with powdered sugar.



Cast-Iron

COOKING SCHOOL

MAKING CHILLED DESSERTS

The beauty of using cast iron is that it not only holds heat longer than other cookware, but it also holds cold temps too! Use cast-iron cookware to keep chilled foods cold when transporting them to potlucks or serving them at holiday buffets.

MOCHA ICEBOX CAKE

Nostalgic desserts, like icebox cakes and pies, were first created during World War I by homemakers who wanted to make the most out of their leftover cookies and sweetened cream.

1¾	cups heavy whipping cream, chilled
12	ounces mascarpone cheese
½	cup granulated sugar
3	tablespoons coffee liquor or strong-brewed coffee
2	tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
1	teaspoon instant espresso powder
1	teaspoon vanilla extract
28	squares chocolate graham crackers
¼	cup fudge ice cream topping, heated just until pourable

1 Cut two long pieces of plastic wrap. Crisscross the pieces to line a cast-iron loaf pan or a deep 10-inch cast-iron skillet, extending plastic wrap over edges of pan or skillet.

2 In a large bowl combine whipping cream, mascarpone cheese, sugar, brewed coffee, cocoa powder, espresso powder and vanilla. Using an electric mixer beat on low speed 1 minute. Increase speed; beat until soft peaks form.

3 To assemble cake, place a single layer of graham crackers on bottom of prepared pan, trimming crackers to cover entire bottom. Spread with one-fourth of the mascarpone mixture. Repeat layers three more times with remaining graham crackers and mascarpone mixture.

4 Smooth top; cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight. To serve, use plastic wrap hanging over the sides to lift cake out of pan. Cut into slices or wedges; drizzle with chocolate sauce.

6 TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Use enamel-coated cast-iron bake- and cookware for acidic foods. The acids will react with uncoated iron and produce off flavors.
- Refrigerate cast-iron cookware for a few hours or until very cold. Just before serving or transporting chilled foods, such as salads and dips, transfer the food to the chilled pan.
- For no-bake pies and desserts, instead of baking graham cracker and cookie crumb crusts, freeze the crust 15 minutes before adding the cream filling.
- Never move a cast-iron pan directly from the refrigerator or freezer to a hot stovetop burner or oven, or place in warm water. The sudden change in temperature will cause the cast iron to crack.
- Protect your hands by using a kitchen towel or oven mitts to pick up or lift cast iron that has been in the freezer or refrigerator. Be sure to protect tabletops with a trivet underneath the pan.
- Follow the Every Day Use & Care guide on page 7 for cleaning, drying and oiling cast-iron cookware that has been used for refrigerated or frozen foods.

MOCHA PUDDING CAKE

PREP 25 minutes **BAKE** 35 minutes **COOL** 15 minutes **SERVES** 6 to 8

Enjoy two desserts in one. As this bakes, a delicious chocolate-coffee pudding forms underneath a rich, dense cake. Serve with scoops of ice cream and it becomes three treats in one!

6	**tablespoons unsalted butter, cut up**
2	**ounces 60-percent cacao chocolate, coarsely chopped**
⅔	**cup unsweetened cocoa powder**
¾	**cup all-purpose flour**
2	**teaspoons baking powder**
¼	**teaspoon salt**
1	**cup granulated sugar**
⅓	**cup packed dark brown sugar**
1	**egg yolk**
⅓	**cup milk**
1	**tablespoon vanilla extract**
1	**cup brewed coffee**
½	**cup water**
	Coffee ice cream or sweetened whipped cream

1 Preheat oven to 325°F. In a 10-inch cast-iron skillet heat butter, chocolate and ⅓ cup cocoa powder over low heat just until butter and chocolate are melted, stirring often. Remove from heat; cool slightly.

2 In a small bowl whisk together flour, baking powder and salt; set aside. In another small bowl whisk together ⅓ cup granulated sugar, brown sugar, and remaining ⅓ cup cocoa.

3 In the skillet with the cooled chocolate, whisk in egg yolk, milk, vanilla and remaining ⅔ cup granulated sugar. Then whisk in flour mixture just until combined. Sprinkle top of batter with brown sugar mixture.

4 Combine coffee and water; carefully drizzle over the batter in the skillet. Bake 35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in cake portion comes out clean. Cool in skillet on a wire rack 15 minutes. Serve warm with ice cream.

RUSTIC FRUIT GALETTE

PREP 25 minutes **BAKE** 30 minutes **SERVES** 6

Match the produce to the season and to your taste. Use a single fruit or a combo. We photographed this beauty in summer, with its mix of apricots, cherries, blackberries and strawberries. In fall, try apples and/or pears.

½	**14.1-ounce package refrigerated pie crust (1 crust), softened as directed on package**
2	**tablespoons ground almonds**
2	**to 3 cups fresh fruit, cut into bite-size pieces (such as strawberries, blackberries, cherries, plums, nectarines, apricots, apples and/or pears)**
3	**tablespoons granulated sugar**
1	**tablespoon cornstarch**
1	**egg white, slightly beaten**
¼	**cup apricot preserves or apple jelly, slightly melted**
	Powdered sugar

1 Preheat oven to 425°F. Gently unroll pie crust onto a 10-inch round cast-iron griddle or 14-inch-round cast-iron baking or pizza pan.* Sprinkle with ground almonds.

2 Place fruit in a large bowl. Combine granulated sugar and cornstarch; sprinkle over fruit. Gently toss until combined. Spoon and arrange fruit mixture in center of pie crust, leaving a 2-inch border. Fold border of dough up and over the edge of the fruit mound, overlapping and pinching pleats in dough border to fit fruit mound. Brush egg white on crust.

3 Bake galette 30 minutes or until crust is light brown. Transfer galette on griddle to a wire cooling rack; brush hot fruit with melted preserves. Cool completely. Just before serving, lightly sprinkle galette with powdered sugar.

✱ If desired, to serve galette on a platter, place a piece of parchment paper on griddle or baking/pizza pan before unrolling pie crust. After cooled, use edges of paper to slide galette onto a platter.

1896

BOURBON PECAN PIE

PREP 20 minutes **BAKE** 1 hour 15 minutes **STAND** 3 hours **SERVES** 8 to 10

As Southern favorites go, this is right up near the top of the list. The extra-deep crust makes this pie extra-good. Don't skip the step of leaving it in the shut-off oven for a couple of hours. Cast iron holds in the heat, so the pie continues to cook.

½ (14.1-oz.) package refrigerated pie crusts (1 crust)
1 tablespoon powdered sugar
6 eggs
2¼ cups packed light brown sugar
¾ cup granulated sugar
¾ cup coarsely chopped pecans
¾ cup unsalted butter, melted
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
3 tablespoons milk
1 tablespoon bourbon
1½ cups pecan halves
Bourbon Whipped Cream

1 Preheat oven to 325°F. Line a 10-inch cast-iron skillet with pie crust pastry; sprinkle with powdered sugar. Lightly cover with plastic wrap to prevent crust from drying out; set aside.

2 For filling, in a large bowl whisk eggs until foamy. Whisk in brown sugar, granulated sugar, ¾ cup chopped pecans, butter, flour, milk and bourbon. Pour filling into pie crust; sprinkle pecan halves evenly on top.

3 Bake 30 minutes. Reduce oven to 300°F; bake 45 minutes. Turn oven off and let pie stand in oven, with door closed, 3 hours. Serve with Bourbon Whipped Cream.

BOURBON WHIPPED CREAM

In a medium bowl, using an electric mixer on medium speed, beat 1 cup heavy whipping cream, 1 tablespoon bourbon, ½ teaspoon sugar and ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract until soft peaks form.

COCONUT-CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE BARS

PREP 15 minutes **BAKE** 50 minutes **MAKES** 12 or 16

Turn your stovetop cast-iron skillet into a baking pan. Instead of scooping the dough into individual cookies, bake the full batch of bars at once.

	Nonstick cooking spray
½	**cup dried cranberries (optional)**
1½	**sticks unsalted butter, at room temperature (12 tablespoons)**
½	**cup granulated sugar**
½	**cup packed dark brown sugar**
¾	**teaspoon salt**
1	**egg**
1	**egg yolk**
2	**teaspoons vanilla extract**
1½	**cups all-purpose flour**
½	**teaspoon baking soda**
2	**cups sweetened shredded coconut**
1½	**cups semisweet chocolate chips**

1 Preheat oven to 325°F. Spray a 9- or 10-inch cast-iron skillet with nonstick spray; set aside. 2 If using cranberries, place in a small bowl with a small amount of very hot water. Let stand until plump. Drain off water. Place cranberries on paper towels to drain completely.

3 In a large bowl, using an electric mixer, beat butter, sugar, brown sugar, and salt on medium speed 2 minutes or until light and creamy.

4 Add egg, egg yolk and vanilla. Beat on medium speed 1 minute. Add ½ cup flour and baking soda; beat until combined. Beat in remaining flour. Stir in coconut, chocolate chips and, if using, cranberries.

5 Spread dough evenly in prepared skillet. Bake 50 to 60 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near center comes out clean. Cool in skillet on wire rack. Cut into 12 or 16 bars.

EASY PINEAPPLE UPSIDE-DOWN CAKE

PREP 15 minutes **BAKE** 40 minutes **COOL** 5 minutes **SERVES** 8 to 10

Start with a mix to make this visually fetching, richly flavored dessert. When it's flipped out of the skillet, it's patterned with caramelized pineapple slices accented with maraschino cherries. Serve plain or with dollops of sweetened whipped cream.

12	**canned pineapple slices packed in juice, drained well (about 3 8-ounce cans)**
3	**tablespoons unsalted butter, melted**
½	**cup packed light brown sugar**
16	**maraschino cherries, drained well**
1	**15.25-ounce package yellow cake mix**
½	**cup canola oil**
3	**eggs**

1 Heat oven to 350°F. Drain pineapple slices well, reserving 1 cup pineapple juice. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet melt butter; remove from heat. Sprinkle brown sugar evenly over butter.

2 Arrange 8 pineapple slices in bottom of skillet. If desired, cut remaining slices in half; arrange around inside edge of skillet. Place 1 cherry in center of each whole and half pineapple slice.

3 In a large bowl, using an electric mixer, beat cake mix, reserved pineapple juice, oil and eggs on low speed until moistened; beat on high speed 2 minutes.

4 Carefully pour batter over fruit in skillet. Bake 40 to 45 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near center comes out clean.

5 Cool cake in skillet 10 minutes. Using a narrow metal spatula or table knife, loosen sides of cake. Place a heatproof plate upside down over cake; invert cake onto plate. Remove skillet. Serve cake warm, or cool completely.

Upside-Down Cakes

Upside-down cakes were once called skillet cakes. This is because ovens were either not available or unreliable. Cakes were "baked" on top of the stove in cast-iron skillets, then inverted for serving. The cast-iron skillet is especially favored for a pineapple upside-down cake because the heavy metal keeps the butter from burning. Instead the butter and brown sugar turns into a delicious caramelized topping.

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RECIPE INDEX

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH
Buttermilk Griddle Cakes With Maple-Nut Syrup 11
Candied Peppery Maple Bacon 16
Cheesy Spinach and Zucchini Frittata 13
Classic Dutch Baby 15
Egg, Spinach and Canadian Bacon Strata 12
Sage Pork Breakfast Patties 18
Sausage 'n' Cheddar Grits Quiche 14
Streusel-Almond Coffee Cake 10
Sweet Potato and Ham Hash 19

SANDWICHES, BURGERS & PIZZA
Cheddar-and-Onion Beer Burgers 25
Deep-Dish Stuffed Pepperoni Pizza 31
Grilled Cheese With Artichoke and Spinach 23
Italian Ham and Cheese Panini With Sun-Dried Tomato Aioli 24
Mushroom and Swiss Turkey Burgers With Chipotle Ketchup 26
Quick BBQ Chicken Pizza 28
Tomato, Bacon and Avocado Grilled Cheese 22
Turkey, Pear and Brie Panini 29

SEAR DELIGHTS
Blackened Rib Eye With Horseradish Sauce 35
Herbed Balsamic Lamb Chops 38
Lemon-Garlic Sea Scallops 40
Pork Chops With Caramelized Onion and Apple 37
Seared Chicken With Orange-Pomegranate Salsa 36
Spice-Crusted Pork Tenderloin 34

ONE-POT SUPPERS
Beefy Cowboy Beans 50
Cheesy Ground Beef Spaghetti 45
Creamy Beef Stroganoff 44
Mediterranean Shrimp and Peppers 52
Pork and Sausage Cassoulet 48
Pork Fried Brown Rice 53
Southern Buttermilk Fried Chicken 46
Spanish-Style Paella 49
Texas-Style Chili 51

BRAISING, STEWING & ROASTING
Ale-Braised Pork Shoulder With Root Vegetables 60
Barbecued Short Ribs 58
Lemon-Sage Roasted Chicken 63
Old-Fashioned Beef Stew 62
Sunday Pot Roast With Tomatoes and Mushrooms 57

COUNTRY CASSEROLES
Alfredo Spinach and Mushroom Lasagna 70
Au Gratin Potatoes-and-Ham Casseroles 78
Chicken and Broccoli Divan 66
Classic Shepherd's Pie 69
Creamy Tuna Noodle Casserole 74
Skillet Chicken Pot Pie 73
Three-Cheese Baked Ziti 77
Turkey and Bean Tamale Pie 71

BISCUITS & BREADS
Buttermilk Cornbread Sticks 93
Cinnamon Monkey Bread 86
Cranberry-Orange Skillet Muffin 83
Herbed Dinner Rolls 88
Herbed Popovers 97
Homemade Italian Bread 95
No-Knead Whole Wheat Bread 96
Orange Scones 84
Parmesan-Herb Focaccia 90
Southern Buttermilk Biscuits 92
Sticky Cinnamon Rolls With Cream Cheese Icing 87

COMFORT DESSERTS
Blueberry Cobbler 100
Bourbon Pecan Pie 109
Caramel-Pecan Ebelskivers 103
Coconut-Chocolate Chip Cookie Bars 110
Easy Pineapple Upside-Down Cake 112
Mocha Icebox Cake 105
Mocha Pudding Cake 106
Old-Fashioned Pound Cake 104
Rustic Fruit Galette 107

88

Herbed Dinner Rolls

Mushroom and Swiss Turkey Burgers With Chipotle Ketchup, page 26

Three-Cheese Baked Ziti, page 77

Herbed Balsamic Lamb Chops, page 38

Rustic Fruit Galette, page 107